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LOAN STACK





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FRONTISPIECE.



*Lift up thine eyes, said his guide, and behold
the image of the City of God. —*

Page 22.

H. Corbould del.

W. Radcliffe Sc.

THE
PILGRIMAGE OF THEOPHILUS

TO THE
City of God.

Butt, John Marten

The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. *Prov. iv. 18.*

There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the City of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. *Psaln xlv. 4.*

The sum of our Saviour's preaching consists in inculcating this one great and fundamental truth of Christianity, that *we are nothing, and God is all in all*: 'tis his word that enlightens our minds, his Spirit directs our wills, his providence orders our affairs, his grace guides us here, and his mercy must bring us to heaven hereafter.

Bishop Lowth's Directions for reading the Holy Scriptures.

WELLINGTON:

Printed by and for F. Houlston and Son.

SOLD ALSO BY G. ROBINSON, 25, PATERNOSTER-RROW, LONDON.

—
1812.

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

52262327

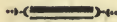
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TO THE READER.



Reader, perchance you scorn the Author's dream,
And things of sight and sense far better deem,
The bird in hand appears thy wiser choice,
And in realities thou wouldst rejoice.

What if this bold conclusion then I make,
That thou the dreamer art, and I awake?

Life is a journey;—this my dreams portend,
Shew the best way, and point the happiest end:
Thy views of permanence on earth shall fall,
Phantasmagoria, one and all.

Reader, thy waking dreams, not mine, thou'lt find,
No trace of solid sense shall leave behind:
Waking ere long, for ever thou shalt weep,
That thou thy day of grace hast spent asleep.

THE WINDY CITY

When I was young and free, the wind was
And I thought of it as the best of
The only one who could give me
And in the wind I found a home
For it is the wind that I love
That gives the answer to my heart
Yes it is a mystery—this wind of mine
Show the best way and lead me
The wind of freedom and of love
The wind of peace and of all
The wind of hope and of all
The wind of love and of all
The wind of love and of all
The wind of love and of all
The wind of love and of all

THE PILGRIMAGE
OF
THEOPHILUS, &c.

—◇—
CHAP. I.

NOT long since, I fell into company with several serious friends, and our conversation turned upon the importance of early piety. We reflected, particularly, upon the daily increasing impediments to repentance, which delay and bad habits produce. And as we had, each of us, dear children of our own, whom we anxiously desired to train up from their earliest youth *in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*; we resolved to endeavour to write something instructive and engaging for the benefit of our several families. Full of this project, I returned to my home: and while I was meditating what I should write for the benefit of my little ones, and urged on by the consideration that I might not live to form their principles, and instruct

them in the great end of their existence, I fell asleep, and in my sleep I dreamed the following dream.

Methought, I seemed lifted from the earth into the clear azure sky, and beheld, at a distance, that great city, which has been properly called the City of *Destruction*. Above it was a thick mist, which obscured the light of the sun and of the stars. In this mist and gloom, I could discern terrible forms, and hideous apparitions, like unto fiery serpents, *the rulers of the power of the air, which work in the hearts of the children of disobedience*. These frightful spectres were invisible to the inhabitants of the city, by reason of the thick volumes of mist which rolled over their heads.

Now I saw that the inhabitants of the place had lamps of their own construction, which represented every thing around very different to its real form and nature. It was strange to observe the ragged dress of these people, and, at the same time, to see them parading the streets, perfectly unconscious that they had not wherewithal to cover their nakedness. But this self-complacency was the effect of the lamps, with which the streets were lighted. I observed too, that all the senses of the people were vitiated, insomuch that they continually mistook *sweet for bitter, and bitter for sweet*. And not only did they yield to every temptation to iniquity, but their delight was in the society of

those only who countenanced and encouraged them in their evil ways.

As I gazed with astonishment upon this *City of Confusion*, I beheld a certain man, called Evangelist, summon the inhabitants together in the name of their King; whereupon many of them being gathered together to hear what the babbler, as they called him, would say, he thus addressed them.

Men and brethren, your Sovereign Lord, the King of the Celestial City, has, you well know, time after time, sent his heralds of peace, to warn you of the dreadful punishment which he is resolved to inflict upon you, unless you return to your allegiance. From the beginning, you have rebelled against him. He created you in his own image, without spot of pollution, perfect in righteousness and happiness. But you have defaced his image, as well as revolted from his government; preferring the polluted garb of Satan to that spotless righteousness which alone can unite you to the God of holiness, the King of Glory; which ineffable union is the august destination and sovereign good of our race. Moreover, you have surrendered yourselves to the great enemy of your souls, even to Apollyon. This traitor has poisoned the whole course of your nature, and incited you to every act of treason and rebellion. He has bereaved you of a blissful paradise, and has brought upon you disease, misery, and death, the wages of sin in

this life; and he will, in the life to come, sting and torture your immortal souls, so that *you shall desire death, and death shall flee from you*. Nevertheless your merciful Sovereign has, repeatedly, sent prophets and holy men, to warn you of the dreadful and everlasting consequences of impenitence and rebellion. Abraham, the father of the faithful, the excellent and meek Moses, the king of Israel, who was the man after his Lord's own heart, yea and he who was the herald of the Prince of Peace, have successively summoned you to *turn from the evil of your ways*. But you have rejected every call to repentance.

Now, as his last warning, your Sovereign Lord commissioneth me to declare unto you, that, having sent forth his most faithful servants, whom you have rejected and insulted, the hour of his judgment is at length arrived. *I saw his throne set in the heavens, and out of the throne proceeded voices, and thunderings, and lightnings. Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him, the judgment was set, and the books were opened.* If it was dreadful to hear the law of the holy Lord God, when first enacted in a voice of thunder from the smoking mountain of God, how much more terrible to hear its loud thunderings against transgressors, in this last expiring hour of forbearance! When, too, *the trumpet was waxing loud, exceedingly loud, and*

every son of man stood guilty, self-convicted, and hopeless before the dread tribunal. *There was none that had done righteousness, no not one that could lift up his hand and plead, not guilty; not a man, that could save himself and deliver his own soul; much less, who could spread the robe of righteousness over himself and all the partakers of his own corrupt and guilty nature.*

Him, whom you serve and honour as your prince, even him saw I stand forth as your accuser; and thus he pleaded against you. O King, who livest for ever! thou hast enacted a Law which changeth not; and hast decreed, that whosoever fulfilleth not all and each of its statutes, in thought, word, and deed, should be delivered into my power, to be cast into the lake of fire, there to be tormented world without end. Does not thy Law itself bear testimony that *cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them?* Thou knowest, O King, that not one of these persons has come up to the requisitions of thy Law: thou thyself hast testified, that *there is none that doeth righteousness, no not one.* Thou didst moreover ordain, that they should all perish through the transgression of their first progenitor, unless a second father could be found for them, who should, in their nature, keep thy Law in its full extent, whole and inviolate, and work out a righteousness sufficient for the whole human race. But

no such champion has appeared, no, nor ever can appear. And now my appointed hour is come; and I demand all the inhabitants of the earth to be given up to me, according to thy word, O King, that I may inflict all my torments upon them.

Then I saw, continued Evangelist, that all they who stood in the presence of the King, were overwhelmed with terror and anguish, for the miseries which were coming upon mankind; and even the Cherubim, who stood nearest to the throne, looking earnestly into the mercy-seat, now covered their faces with their wings, and wept.

At this instant,—at this crisis,—when the herald of judgment was calling aloud to the heavens above, and to the earth beneath, and to the dead which are under the earth, to produce a champion able to encounter the adversary of man, and no champion appeared; and when the sentence of the Law was about to be pronounced upon every transgressor of the Law, and the destroyer about to inflict the excruciating sting of everlasting torment upon every fallen creature,—on a sudden—beyond all expectation—at the critical moment, an unknown and disguised champion stood forth, and entered the lists. But so mean and despicable was his appearance, that even you, in whose cause he stood forth, refused to look to him for deliverance, and declared that you would not accept it at his hands.

Yea, you yourselves, the objects of his most tender love, leagued against him, and were offended in him; *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men; he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.*

Nevertheless, I saw, that, despised as he was of man, he was accepted of the Almighty as the champion of mankind, and set his foot upon the straight and narrow path of divine righteousness. But no sooner had he commenced the perilous achievement, than all the powers of darkness, combined with the principalities of this world, bore down to thrust him from the narrow and arduous pass, never surmounted by man. He was tempted, he was mocked, he was buffeted, he was stricken; yet forwards he held his unbending course, firm as the rock in the ocean assailed by the force of every wind and wave. Not a single deviation from perfect rectitude before God, in thought, word, or deed. Nothing too little, nothing too much, in his whole life and conversation. The learned and the wise marshalled themselves to prove and vanquish his wisdom; and the learned and the wise were alike convinced of folly, and never again ventured to resume the contest. Satan exhibited before him all his treasures, and would gladly have bribed him with all his dominions; but the Prince of darkness received an answer and rebuke, such as he had never before experien-

ced. Onwards he held his inflexible course along the solitary, keen, and tremendous ridge, by which the narrow path of divine righteousness conducted him. Narrower and more narrow did the path become; steeper and more steep the ascent; more horrible and lofty the precipices on the right hand and on the left. The smallest error, or misconception, would have whirled him, and with him all our race, into the bottomless pit. Nevertheless, all the legions of earth and hell, charging at once upon him, were not able to make the slightest impression upon the shield of his faith.

At last the grand conflict arrived, and he prepared to storm the castle and dungeon of the Prince of the power of darkness; and he descended into the great deep. In this stupendous achievement, behold him deserted by his terrified servants, sweating great drops of blood, crowned with thorns, and nailed to the dreadful cross.

I beheld, and lo! all the armies of earth and hell were now let loose in the plenitude of their power, and rushed upon him. *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter.* And now, O sight stupendous! unsubdued and undismayed by the shock of created powers without number, albeit now expiring upon the bloody cross, he dares an adversary infinitely more powerful than all he had hitherto sustained. *He*

who knew no sin, now became sin for us; and faced, unmoved, the infinite wrath and indignation of the Almighty against sin, concentrated as in a burning focus upon his mortal frame. Powers and principalities of the heaven of heavens, angels and archangels, what were now your sensations, when you beheld a mortal sustain the unrestrained wrath and indignation of his Creator, and heard him at length triumphantly exclaim, *It is finished*—The divine Law is fulfilled, the strength of sin is destroyed, and the sting of death plucked out. Down into the castle of the adversary he plunges; binds him hand and foot; leads captivity captive, and ascends to the tribunal of the Most High, and demands a suspension of the righteous judgment of God, and a reversion of the dreadful sentence of condemnation upon all the children of Adam. Vast demand! to satisfy the indignation of infinite Holiness against a world of sinners, and to plead the fulfilment of all righteousness! Yet not a single charge is heard against him, not an exception ventured against all his claims by the malicious and penetrating adversary himself, who had watched and withstood him from his birth to his last agony. Here also he prevails, and is pronounced by the heart-searching Judge, the divine Lawgiver, to be not only perfectly righteous in himself, but to possess righteousness sufficient for the salvation of all mankind. All his demands are

immediately granted; he is exalted to the right hand of the Most High; the representative of man, in whom perfect and essential holiness seeth no sin!

Then I heard the glad tidings of redemption, *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will towards men*, celebrated with the loud voice of angels and archangels, falling down before the throne, and crying, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

And now, behold, I make known unto you, and declare, in the name of your King and Judge, these glad tidings of great joy, this mighty salvation, of which if you can hear and remain unmoved, you are then, I fear, hardened beyond all hope of recovery. I make known then to all here present, that, seeing there was no one found in heaven above, nor in the earth beneath, able to satisfy the just demands of the Judge of all the earth, and inasmuch as he could not dispense with the fulfilment of his righteous law,—He himself, He, the Maker and Judge of rebellious man, has stepped down from his throne of glory, taken upon him our mean nature, *borne all our sorrows, carried all our griefs*, and submitted to every disgrace and torture, which the lowest and most inveterate of his enemies could inflict upon him; yea, that *God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.*

Men and brethren, how marvellous is the loving-kindness of your Lord, in working out, himself, the deliverance of his enemies! *How shall you escape if you neglect this great salvation?* Behold, once more he granteth you place for repentance, and offers you a spotless righteousness, which he himself has wrought out for every one among you, who will place his whole dependance upon him; and he will not only render you perfectly righteous in himself by faith, if you stedfastly believe on him; but he will give you the Spirit by the hearing of faith,—the Spirit of Illumination, the Spirit of Sanctification, the Spirit of Consolation, that he may abide with you for ever!

O then ponder well the greatness of your offences, which have drawn down from heaven your great and mighty Judge; and while you behold him nailed to the cross, under the burden of your sins, confess *blood-guiltiness*, and feel the *exceeding sinfulness of sin*. And O, weigh well and feel his unspeakable love towards you, in enduring the sharpness of death, in order to open unto you the way of salvation which leadeth to the City of God. Fly directly to him, while he is willing to receive you; escape without delay from this accursed place; and humble yourselves before the King of kings, and Lord of lords; remembering, that, to all your transgressions you have added this most dreadful crime, that *you have con-*

demned and killed the Righteous, even your best friend, while he was serving your best interests. If you lose this hour of grace, another will not, cannot be given; but your aggravated offences will speedily plunge both you and your city into inevitable and eternal destruction. The clouds of wrath are gathering round you, the lightning is burning from the clouds, the earth is quaking. Escape for your lives, without one moment's delay. Look not back, but haste *to the mountain which is at the end of the plain, lest you perish in the overthrow of the city*. Even now the eye of faith beholds him *coming in the glory of his Father, and of the holy angels*, to execute everlasting vengeance upon the impenitent, and to perform all his promises to the faithful.

He comes, he comes, the rending sky
Displays the Saviour's form on high,
The congregated clouds his seat,
And tempests rolling at his feet.

Alleluiah.

He comes, he comes, on either side
His marshall'd saints in glory ride;
While the dreadful trumpet's roar
Proclaims, that Time is now no more.

Alleluiah.

He comes, he comes, and every eye
Is lifted to the flaming sky,

All the hosts of quick and dead
At length to Jesus bow the head.

Alleluiah.

Now every heart its witness bears,
And guilt the conscious sinner scares;
But saints transform'd, admiring stand,
And raise the voice, and stretch the hand.

Alleluiah.

Now quick descending from on high,
Angels waft them to the sky,
Clothe them in dazzling robes of white,
And seat them in eternal light.

Alleluiah.

Now the whole triumphant band
Seize the golden harp in hand,
And wrapt in wonder view his face,
And laud and magnify his grace.

Alleluiah.

By the Prince of psalmists led,
Him they sing, for them who bled;
Now fully feel that wondrous love,
Which drew *Immanuel* from above.

Alleluiah.

Ours, and not other eyes behold
Whom apostles view'd of old;
Whom thy prophets bade us seek,
Not half thy glory could they speak.

Alleluiah.

Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
This consummation of thy word,
This bliss supreme, this joy complete,
Jesus, of standing at thy feet!

Alleluiah.



CHAP. II.



NOW I saw in my dream, that, when Evangelist had delivered his message, and concluded his exhortation, the greater number of the inhabitants of the city treated his words with contempt; and some even proceeded to revile and threaten the preacher of righteousness. But it was evident, that even these were secretly impressed with terror, though they resisted and stifled every rising conviction. So piercing is the edge of divine truth even to the carnal heart.

The scorers reprobated his charges as unfounded, and alleged that they were not guilty of rebellion. We are not concerned, said they, in the apostacy of our forefathers, and we have not all personally transgressed the letter of the royal Law. Yea we have a zeal for our King, and have not in vain sought to *establish our own righteousness* before him.

A small number however felt the commandments of the Law come home to their consci-

ences in spirit and in power, and were cut to the quick. These persons made up to Evangelist, and confessing themselves verily guilty before the King, expressed their deep and alarming convictions of that guilt which had, in effect, bowed the heavens, and constrained their Judge, as the only means of magnifying his righteous Law, and, at the same time, of exercising mercy and grace, to fulfil, himself, all righteousness, and die the death of the vilest malefactor. They explicitly acknowledged, that *if one man died for all, then were all dead*; and they eagerly besought Evangelist to give them a more full direction concerning the way, by which they might escape for their lives, and make their peace with the King.

Then Evangelist shed tears of joy over them, and assured them that the whole household of the King of the Celestial City rejoiced on their account; *for they had been lost, and they were found; they had been dead, and they were alive again*. Then, after much admonition and exhortation, he gave to each of them, separately, the volume of the book of life, charging them to consult it on all occasions; and, at the same time, earnestly to pray for light to understand it, for humility to submit to it, and for power to act according to its precepts. Thus only, said the prophet, shall it make you *wise unto salvation*, and preserve you from all error in the way which leadeth to eternal life.

Now I particularly noticed among those who applied to Evangelist for directions concerning the way to the City of God, a young person of the name of Theophilus, who waited behind to speak to the prophet. Having obtained an opportunity of privately addressing him, he spake to this purpose—Minister of our great King, thy words have impressed me deeply, and I tremble for my life. I intreat you to inform me, whether, in the overthrow of this city, persons of my age will be treated as guilty of rebellion towards our lawful sovereign? Will not my youth plead my excuse?

My Son, replied Evangelist, I am well pleased with thy alarm respecting thy safety; but I cannot give you any encouragement to hope, that you can possibly be preserved from destruction, except by escaping for your life. Even from thy *conception* thou hast been *a child of wrath*, under condemnation to everlasting torments. He that cannot lie hath thus pronounced concerning thee.

But, my father, replied the young man, trembling, is it necessary for me to fly without delay from the City of my Nativity? Have I not many years before me, and will it not be early enough for me at a future time to make my peace with the King?

My Son, rejoined the venerable man, affectionately fixing his majestic eye upon Theophilus, *while thou hast the light, walk as a child of*

the light, the night cometh wherein no man can work. He, in whom thou livest, movest, and hast thy being, who can strike thee dead in a moment, he it is, who now calleth thee to fly from the wrath to come. Of those who resist his solemn call, young as thyself, thousands he cutteth off, as in a moment, and casteth into eternal fire; thousands he leaveth to their own inclinations; and with Him depart for ever, the will and the power to repent. My son, thou hast good reason to say to thy soul, Now or never—Now or never is the path of peace before my feet; now or never is the gate of salvation open to me; now or never is the City of God within my reach. Hesitate not therefore one moment, my son, to escape for thy life, thy eternal life. The difficulties which thousands and tens of thousands have overcome in the strength of the Lord their God, should not terrify thee. O, couldst thou, but for one moment, see the ineffable blessedness and glory of that communion of saints, which standeth in the everlasting sunshine of the Divine Presence, thou wouldst *count all things but as loss* to sit down with the fathers in the kingdom of glory. *These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on earth, desiring a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not*

ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city.

Now I saw that Evangelist, having thus exhorted the young man, and earnestly prayed for a blessing upon him, presented him with the volume of the Book of Life, and bade him God speed.

For some time Theophilus seemed lost in thought, meditating, whether he should immediately take the advice of Evangelist, and quit the city of his nativity; or, whether he should first take leave of his friends. At one time he would cast his eyes towards the East, in which quarter were situated the Wicket-gate, and the burning and shining light. At another time he felt his heart drawn to his friends. At last he decided in his mind, that it would be best not to take so bold and adventurous a step all at once; but gradually to extricate himself from his old connections, if he could not prevail upon his friends to enter into his views, and accompany him to Mount Sion. So he returned to the house of his tutor, Mr. Carnal-mind, and joined his old associates and school-fellows; among whom were Love-the-world, Dread-of-singularity, Evil-habit, and others of the same description; all of whom assumed to themselves soft and plausible names, by which they were called in this city. For it was here deemed a proof of unpardonable uncharitableness, and disloyalty to the reputed prince of the place, to

speaking of sin according to its true name and nature.

Now the inexperienced youth had no sooner returned to his old companions, than he found himself involved in inextricable difficulties, and heartily wished that he had directly followed the advice of Evangelist, and without delay escaped from this society. He now felt that he should not be able to influence his friends; on the contrary, he found himself strongly influenced by them. His old habits, the fear of enmity and ridicule, and rising doubts, on one side restrained him from commencing his pilgrimage; while, on the other, conviction and terror agitated his conscience. During this miserable state of indecision, he would at times, when he believed himself unobserved, go forth at the Eastern gate of the city, and proceed as far as he dared, reading in his book, and looking towards the Wicket-gate, if peradventure he might discern the glory of the morning star, which rises over it.

Now it came to pass that in one of these little excursions, Theophilus was observed by his old companions. And no sooner did they guess at his intention to forsake them, than they determined to prevent the execution of his purpose. So they quickly prepared their bows, and dipped their arrows in the gall of ridicule; and at once set upon him. And now was Theophilus well nigh stung to death by these venomous and rankling shafts, and found himself

constrained to decide whether he should renounce the City of God, or the City of Destruction. For he felt that he should now be compelled by his companions to go all lengths with them, unless he quitted them for ever. *But, the way of a man is not in himself.* His Heavenly Father had made ready the path in which he should go; and this discovery and opposition were the means by which he should become decided in his determination to quit the City of Destruction. For the first time he now felt his own insufficiency, and lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, he besought the King to send him a guide and assistant, who might both place him in the way, and enable him to overcome all opposition.

While he was yet praying, I beheld, and lo ! a grave and venerable female clothed in white raiment, came towards him, and taking him by the hand, said, My son, *be strong and of good cheer. My strength is made perfect in weakness.* From the beginning I was sent unto thee by the great King; and unseen by thee *I opened thine heart to hearken* to the words of Evangelist. Alike unperceived I have drawn thee onwards to this place, and have only waited to manifest myself as thy guide, until thou shouldst learn by experience, *that without me thou canst do nothing.* As she spake these words, I saw the spirits of the young man revive: I saw him lift up his abashed head, and in the spirit of firmness, tem-

pered by meekness, reply to the scoffers, who sat in the gate—My dear friends, be you admonished, yourselves to escape from the destruction which awaits you, if you remain in the City of Apollyon. Farewell.

Having thus addressed his old companions, and bade them farewell, he turned to his guide, who bade him follow her, and pray for the conversion of his friends.

Now the atmosphere of the neighbourhood of the city, where they were travelling, was still oppressed with thick mists and clouds, and Theophilus went on, *not knowing whither he went*. But I perceived, that, as they proceeded; the young man enquired of his guide her name, and she replied; My name is Heavenly Wisdom. *I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me. Riches and honours are with me, yea durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea than much fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver—I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment—The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way before his works of old—now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children; for blessed are they that keep my way.*

Now I saw that Theophilus and his celestial guide continued their way till they passed through the region of thick clouds and darkness. The hour in which they emerged from the smoke and fogs of the city was that which

immediately precedes the dawn of day. And now, for the first time, Theophilus distinctly beheld the bright and silent canopy of heaven, and the full-orbed moon slowly sailing across the sky.

Lift up thine eyes, said his guide, and behold the image of the City of God. *As one star differeth from another star in glory, so also is the resurrection of the dead. They that be wise shall shine as the stars, in the heaven of heavens. There is neither speech nor language, but their voice is heard among them.* They cry aloud, as it were unto thee, and proclaim the omnipotence of their Creator, and the glory of his kingdom. What beauty, what stability, what harmony is there in those invisible heavens, of which these are but the faint type and shadow! Let the solemn night, which shews and expands to thine eye the constellations of material glory, always carry thy thoughts to that still more solemn night of death, which will unveil unto thee the stars which are in the right hand of the Most High, his chosen and faithful angels, and make manifest unto thee that heaven of heavens, which shall never pass away.

At length the fair morning star rose above the horizon, and the dawn illuminated the East. But a morning cloud was spread over the mountain on which the Wicket-gate stood, and as yet it was hardly discernible.

The gentle guide now addressed the young

man to this purpose. It has pleased the gracious King, and his beloved Shepherd, to commission me to raise and exalt thy views to that world of glory, which the dim-sighted sons of Apollyon regard not. Tell me now, my son, art thou earnestly desirous to see the King in his glory, *to join the blessed assembly of the first born written in heaven; to enjoy the society of angels and archangels, and of the spirits of just men made perfect*, and to embrace thy dear father and mother?

My heart, replied Theophilus, burned within me, while thou didst converse upon these glorious prospects. I felt like one awakened out of sleep; and all my past pleasures and pursuits seem to me like an idle dream. Eternity seems as it were spread before my eyes and as it were already come, in its length, its breadth, its depth, and its height. How could I have been so long in darkness? O yes! Lead me, and I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest—Lead me to the King of Glory, to the City of God, and to the company of the blessed; and let me once more see my dear parents, of whom there now remaineth unto me only a faint and tender recollection, yet sweet as that delightful melody, which, I could imagine, I heard proceeding from the celestial spheres, when you pointed out to me their order, harmony, and obedience to their great King.

I am glad, my son, replied Heavenly Wisdom,

that you have some recollection of your excellent parents. I was their guide through the Valley of Tears to the Celestial City. *In all their affliction I was afflicted, and I bare them and carried them through the Wilderness.* Now they stand in the presence of the Heavenly King, clothed in robes of glory, harping the sweet songs of Sion. Of all their afflictions, this they felt most keenly, that it was not allotted to them to train thee up in my ways. They both together came to a cruel death, for the love they bare the sweet shepherd of their souls. Yet, in the very bitterness of their sufferings, they forgot not thee, Theophilus; but most fervently called upon me, by the name of Him, which I never hear unmoved, and earnestly entreated me to become thy guardian, to watch about thy bed, and bring thee, at length, unto them, never to be separated. O Theophilus, I conjure thee by the prayers of thy dying parents, and by the love, and regard, and solicitude, which they still retain for thee, to aspire, with all thy soul, to join thy parents in the groves of Paradise! Hast thou a heart, my son, to be drawn by Love, by the hope of glory?

Lead me on, exclaimed Theophilus, nothing shall deter me. My heart is set; it resolves. No difficulty shall discourage me. Time is cast behind me: I stand upon the brink of eternity. Yea, all things are become new unto my soul.

My son, rejoined Heavenly-Wisdom, I do not wish to damp and discourage thy zeal and ardour; but it is now necessary for thee to know that thy zeal and love will be tried to the utmost; and that the path of glory is rough, narrow, and steep. The weather will not always be serene and fair. The lights of heaven will often be obscured over thy head. Thine enemies are numerous and mighty. Read in thy book of those who stand before the Great Shepherd, and thou wilt learn that they *all came out of great tribulation*.

All and each of them were tried, and tempted, till they were compelled to acknowledge their own insufficiency, as of themselves, and to ascribe *the kingdom, the power, and the glory*, to their King. My son, if thou hast ears to hear, treasure up this maxim from the beginning of thy pilgrimage, and thou shalt find it to be the pearl of inestimable value: *When I am weak, then am I strong*. Look not to thyself, look not to men—look to thy book, and to me, thy appointed guide, and *thou shalt have more understanding than thy teachers, thou shalt be wiser than the aged*. Let no reasonings of thyself or others tempt thee to undervalue thy book. Read not as thou believest, but believe as thou readest; and thou, even thou, my child, in so doing, shalt find the wisdom of The Ancient of Days.

CHAP. III.

THE broad orb of day now rose in the East to the astonishment of Theophilus. His eyes could not bear its light, nor could he look stedfastly upon his guide. But I saw that he took out his book, and read therein, *In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun—there is nothing hid from the heat thereof, the Law of the Lord is an undefiled Law.* These words cast a sudden horror upon the soul of Theophilus—But he read again in his book, and found these words, *Ye cannot serve the Lord, for he is an holy God; he is a jealous God, he will not forgive your transgressions and your sins.* Then I saw that the young man began to tremble, and to hesitate, whether he should proceed, or return to his place. Woe, Woe is me, he exclaimed, if I cannot bear the light of the orb of day, how shall I stand before the glory of God? I now perceive that perfection only can be united to perfection. I perceive that he is a spirit, and searcheth every thought of the heart. As-

surely I can never behold him and live, while there is *one spot or wrinkle of sin upon me*. I see too, that, as the light proceeds from the sun, in its very image and likeness, so the Law of the Most High is an undefiled Law, which requires conformity in thought, word, and deed; and that of necessity, if it be broken in part, it is as ineffectual for my salvation, as if it were altogether broken.

To this his amazement and terror was added that, beholding his garments by the light from above, he discovered also for the first time, that he was clothed with rags. Then he read in his book these words, *All our righteousness is as filthy rags.—The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal: sold under sin.*

Then did Theophilus begin to look upon himself with anguish and horror, and to despair of beholding the King of Glory. Alas! said he, how shall I be accepted without a wedding-garment? Am I not poor, and naked, and miserable? Yea, I perceive, that the poison of Apollyon hath infected the whole course of my nature. *I see a Law in my members, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Alas! The King, before whom I desire to stand, requires me to be *perfect even as he is perfect*. His Law is the very image of himself, the perfection of spirituality and holiness. But as for me, Apollyon

still holds me captive, and draws me into continual rebellion. My very nature hath no good, nor, of itself, any will to do good, inherent in it. Alas! *What shall I do to be saved?*

Now I saw that the place, where he was walking, was exceedingly miry and full of bogs, and he began to sink in the Slough of *Despond*. So he cried out again, *Save me, O God: for the waters are come in, even unto my soul. I stick fast in the deep mire, where no ground is: I am come into deep waters, so that the floods run over me; let not the water-flood drown me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me.* Thus he continued to cry aloud for a considerable time, but his faithful guide appeared not to assist him, and the more he struggled to extricate himself, so much the more he sunk in the quagmire.

Now while he was thus desponding, an elderly gentleman, well known by the name of Mr. Wordly-wiseman, came towards him from the side of the City of Destruction, and thus addressing him, offered him assistance.

In the name of common-sense, my son, who has beguiled thee into this slough?

THEOPHILUS. My conductor, Sir, was no other than Heavenly-Wisdom.

WORDLY-WISEMAN. Rather say, One whom you have mistaken for Heavenly-Wisdom, but whose true name is Enthusiasm. I can give a pretty good guess at the instructions

which you have received. Have you not been directed to believe the most absurd and unreasonable account of your King, and of yourself? Be assured, you would not have been sinking in this place, if you had not forsaken reason and common-sense. Does not right reason certify you that you are by nature such as your King made you; and that you cannot be chargeable with the offences which were committed before you were born? Can you for a moment, if you are in your right senses, suppose that your Heavenly Father requires you to do that which he knows to be impossible for you to perform? No, my son, be not made a fool of; I will help thee out of this difficulty, and put thee in the right way to the Celestial City; and if thou wilt not, then, make use of that first and indispensable gift of common-sense, I pity thee.

THEO. Pray, Sir, point out to me the way which you recommend.

MR. W. W. My son, I do not recommend to thee the way of Legality, any more than I would have thee remain in this quagmire. But there is a road on the right of the hill before you, called the Laodicean new road, which cannot but be approved by every judicious and discreet person. It must be thy determination not to bury thy natural talents in this slough, but to strive and do all that is in thy power to attain the Celestial City; and then thou mayest reasonably hope, that what is wanting in thee,

either of strength or righteousness, will be supplied by the power and merits of thy gracious Redeemer. But be not so weak as either to trust altogether in his assistance, or in thy own endeavours. And why shouldst thou humble thyself so far as to renounce all merit in serving the King? If nothing depends upon thyself, but every thing upon the will and power of the King, leave thy deliverance wholly to him, and give thyself no concern about it. But if any thing depends upon thyself, so far thou must work for thyself, and in so doing thou dost, in the same degree, *make thyself to differ from another*, and become more worthy than others of glory and reward. Tell me, my son, is not this incontrovertibly true?

Then I saw that Theophilus, being perplexed by *the rudiments of the world*, was inclining to accept the assistance of Mr. W. W. but it pleased the King, that, in this dilemma he should call in deep humility, with a loud voice, for wisdom from above to direct him whither he should turn; humbly confessing that wisdom of his own he had none. No sooner had he thus cried out, than one appeared, at sight of whom Mr. W. W. turned pale—it was the graceful form of Heavenly-Wisdom herself; and thus she refuted the deceiver. Stand back, thou impostor, for out of the mouth of babes and sucklings I will silence and humble thee. Theophilus, thou hast acknowledged, that of thyself thou

hast no wisdom; and therefore I have heard thee, and will remain with thee so long as thou sincerely believest what thou hast said. I am well pleased that thou hast seen and felt thy extreme guilt and danger. Now open thy book and read. So Theophilus opened his book and read, *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.* At the same instant Theophilus perceived the steps of general promises addressed to every creature, and which had hitherto escaped his observation. And so, confessing his guilt before the King, and acknowledging that he had fallen *short of the Glory of God*, that his best actions hitherto had had the nature of sin, and that no performance of his could endure the severity of God's judgment; lamenting that he had *no health* in himself, through the corruption of his nature and the ascendancy of Satan in his heart, he pleaded, *Guilty*, in all simplicity of soul, and, as if delivered from a great burden, easily rose out of the mire, and by means of the steps crossed entirely over the Slough of Despond. Then quickly passing over the plain, he arrived with his celestial guide at the foot of the hill, whereon the Wicket-gate was placed by the Lord of the way. On either side of this hill branch off two broad and smooth ways with very wide gates at the entrance of them, which when Theophilus beheld, he began to doubt within himself, which

way he should take: and, seeing the porter of the right-hand gate, he enquired of him, whither that way would lead him.

To whom the man replied, My son, this is the direct road to the Celestial City, and a very pleasant road it is. Do not be surprised, that it is both broad and pleasant, and much frequented; think not so harshly of the King, as to suppose that he made the greater part of his creatures to perish; or that he requires any thing of them which it is impossible for them to perform. *His ways are ways of pleasantness.* Has he not himself annulled the severity of his law, and declared his intention of accepting, instead of perfect obedience, the sincere endeavour to perform his will? And it must be clear to every one's reason, that more than a man's utmost endeavours no one can expect of him. Believe then that your King is good and gracious, and that he has, in great wisdom, thought fit to shew that mercy through the mediation of his Son, which he could not but in some way have conferred upon his creatures. Believe in his mercy, enter in at the gate. All past offences are blotted out; and if you exert yourself to the utmost, be assured, he will require no more than you are able to perform, and will not be wanting to assist you in every difficulty.

Theophilus seemed to incline to follow the porter's advice; but observing the man more closely, he was surprised to see that his gar-

ments were worn out, and *patched with new cloth*. He also observed the staff, on which he was leaning, to break with his pressure, and *pierce his own hand*.

At this instant, the porter of the left-hand gate cried aloud to him to beware of the Deceiver; and approaching him, addressed him as follows. I am sent to teach thee the true way; *and be not thou again brought into the bondage of the beggarly elements of the Law. Believe only, and thou shalt be saved*. Enter in at my gate, and Christian liberty is before thee. *All things are lawful for thee*. I will teach thee *to make thy calling and election sure* by a voice from heaven; and when once thou art satisfied that thou hast received the spirit of adoption by that solemn call, thou mayest rest assured that thy sins will all be covered, and that no one shall be heard who chargeth thee with any transgression: and what privilege like unto this, at once to be delivered from the restraints of the Moral Law and still to be assured of Salvation! Now was Theophilus in a great dilemma, and much distressed in his mind. He was reduced once more to feel his need of direction from his heavenly guide; from whom, in the pride of independence, he had insensibly diverted his attention. So he again called aloud for wisdom from above, and confessed his own weakness and folly. Then did the majestic form of his divine guide once more appear; and, laying her hand upon his

head, she bade him read in the book which Evangelist had given him. So, turning himself to the former of the porters, he pronounced these words, *We conclude that a man is justified by Faith without the deeds of the Law.* And then turning to the latter, he read, *Shew me thy faith by thy works; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord.* Deceivers, *cease to pervert the right ways of the King.* Having thus spoken, he followed his guide up the ragged cliff, and speedily entered into the cloud which was spread over the mountain.

Now he exceedingly feared when he entered into the cloud, and with difficulty distinguished his beloved guide; and, through the fear which came upon him, all his transgressions seemed to rise before him, as clearly as if he were already standing before the King, at the very bar of divine justice. While he was thus advancing, awe-struck and trembling, I saw that arrows were shot from an invisible hand; some of which wounded him severely, and filled him with doubt, whither he might be going.

At length he beheld the Wicket-gate, and, looking up, read the following inscription, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life.* Then going up to the gate, he knocked, and cried out for admittance: whereupon One from within enquired of him, what he wanted, and upon what ground he hoped to obtain admittance. I am come, said Theophilus, to confess my

guilt, and to seek mercy from the King by the mediation of his Son. Particularly I confess with the deepest sorrow, that in every thought, word, and deed, I have come short of my duty towards the King, and that, if he *enter into judgment with me*, I cannot be pardoned. I put all my confidence in the death of his Son alone; I rely upon nothing else; I cast myself wholly upon the King's grace and mercy, proffered to every creature by his blessed Son. I plead his own words, *Whoso cometh unto me I will by no means cast out.*

PORTER. But the King will judge thee.

THEO. Put the death of the King's Son between me and his judgment; otherwise I contend not with him.

PORTER. Thou art dead in trespasses and sins.

THEO. Put the righteousness of the royal Mediator between the eye of the most righteous King and my unrighteousness.

PORTER. Thou dost deserve everlasting condemnation.

THEO. Spread the merits of my glorious representative and surety between the sentence of the King and my demerits. I plead his merits, instead of the merits I ought to have and have not: in the ever-blessed name of the King's Son, *I knock that it may be opened unto me.* The gate then gradually opened, even as Theophilus was pronouncing, in simple and

entire dependance, the ever-blessed name of the great Intercessor. At the same time a bright and glorious light flashed upon him from within, while the porter pronounced aloud,

All sins confess, all promises believe,
And peace, eternal peace from me receive.

Now I saw, that, as Theophilus stepped across the threshold of the door, his ragged and filthy garments vanished, and he received a white and spotless garment, the robe of immortality and righteousness. Then did Theophilus rejoice, and return thanks to his heavenly guide; who spake to him in reply as follows. My son, blessed be the King who hath sent me to lead thee forth from the City of Destruction, and to bear thee across the Valley of Repentance. Happy art thou in the conviction of thy own wretchedness and misery; happy in thy deep contrition; happy in thy unreserved confession; and happier still in thy conversion from self-sufficiency to faith in the promises of thy King. Beware lest thou be puffed up again, and remember even to the end of thy journey, that *my strength will consist in thy weakness.*

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CHAP. IV.
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How wilt thou steer, young man, thy way,
While the ancients widely stray?
If to the right or left thou bend,
In ruin will thy journey end.

“ With my whole heart have I believ’d,
“ And from the Lord this book receiv’d,
“ This will I study day and night,
“ By this I steer to endless light.”

Thousand seducers thee surround,
To draw thee to unhallow’d ground;
Ten thousand foes thy course withstand,
To drive thee from fair Salem’s land.

“ Close to the heavenly gale I steer,
“ Nor sand, nor rock, nor tempest fear.
“ My rudder shall obey the word,
“ Which from thy mouth, O God, I’ve heard.”

Go on, young man, I fear no more
Lest thou come short of Canaan’s shore.
Would in simplicity so wise
God’s only *guidance* all did prize.

NOW I saw in my dream that, no sooner
had Theophilus laid aside his own con-
temptible garments, and received the robe of

an unspotted incorruptible righteousness, than the house of the Interpreter appeared in sight. To his dwelling-place did Heavenly-Wisdom conduct the young pilgrim. The venerable teacher received him with a gracious salutation, and afforded him a sweet refreshment of milk and honey; after which they entered into conversation, and thus the instructor of pilgrims addressed the young man. My son, I am glad to see in my house the children of the righteous: I rejoice to see their feet set in *the way which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. Tell me, young man, do you feel a doubt whether the King of the Celestial City is able and willing to fulfil his glorious promises to those who persevere in this way unto the end?

THEO. I confess, good Interpreter, that sometimes I feel my doubts of his power and goodness, especially as towards myself; sometimes I feel that it is nevertheless most safe for me, nay, that it is the only way of safety, to seek happiness in searching out and doing his will: and while I am actually engaged in this work, I feel hope and confidence, and a willingness to depart this life which I never before experienced; but on the contrary, always was troubled by the expectation of death.

INTER. Consider then, my son, upon what firm foundation the promises of your great King are established. Here is the volume of his covenant. Herein is historical evidence,

commencing with the foundation of the world, and terminating with the manifestation of the Prince of the Covenant. What historical evidence like unto this? Herein is prophetic evidence, much of which is already confirmed by its fulfilment; and which, in union with the history, may be compared to a sublime arch, cast over the whole extent of measured time. Herein is described to the life, the Son of the Most High, speaking *as man never spake*, manifesting truth to all men, with self-evident rectitude and unexampled perspicuity. Here the stream of divine holiness is felt to flow with a purity which cleanseth the heart; and the glory of the divine attributes to *shine forth in the face*, the doctrines and the operations, of the Incarnate Word. Nevertheless, my son, full and irresistible as is the light of truth and glory which proceeds from the ark of the testimony, would you feel full assurance of the certainty of the promises, and apply them with all confidence to yourself, remember, that full assurance is the effect of an experimental knowledge of the way of holiness, and perfect faith the reward only of perfectly devoting the heart to *the obedience of faith*. Go to the poor and unlearned pilgrim, who is thus devoted to the service of his King, and ask *a reason of the faith which is in him*; and, if he can analyze and describe his own experience, he will reply, I heard the word of the Most High; I felt a divine

verity in it; I proved it, and found the promises of it to be *yea and amen!* *And this is the confidence that we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and we know that we have the petitions which we desired of him.* Are we in temptation, we pray for strength: are we in trouble, we pray for peace. That righteousness and happiness, which we cannot any other way acquire, in this way we do obtain; and thus *we know that we have our petitions; and this is our confidence in him,* a confidence which no human reasoning can shake, because it is founded in positive experience, that God is as near and manifest to us through Jesus Christ, as he was to Abraham on Mount Moriah, to Moses on Mount Horeb, and to St. Peter on the Mountain of Glory.

THEO. Thank you, good Interpreter, you have convinced me that perfect faith is justly appointed to be the reward of perfect practice, by the operation of experience, and trial of the truth. I will endeavour to seek assurance in this way; and whenever I feel a doubt springing up, I will pray to have the sin, from the allowance of which the doubt arises, revealed and mortified.

INTER. Proceed in this way, my son, and *your path will be as the light which shineth more and more unto perfect day.* Would I could deeply impress upon your mind, the blessedness of giving your whole heart to your Hea-

venly Father. Whatever gratifications arise from the indulgence of a corrupt nature, they always leave a sting behind, and are accompanied with a fear of death. The prospect of the sinner is always clouded with fearful gloom and darkness; and of all temporal evils, a wounded spirit, a consciousness of daily approach to infinite misery, is the most insupportable. Verily *Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.*

To speak only of that blessed hope, which increases with the increase of zeal, and languishes with inactivity in the way of holiness; consider the prospect which is set before you, the everlasting blessedness of the children of light in the City of God. In truth, the daily approximation to consummate bliss, the sensation that you are hourly nearer to Mount Sion than when you first believed, the nearing prospect of the heavenly Canaan, act upon the heart of the lively pilgrim in a way of consolation and joy, which he only who has experienced it can describe. It was this that made the Apostle, who had been caught up to Paradise, exclaim, *Yea, we rejoice in tribulation also.* Yea, so blessed a thing is this hope, that it is almost *the substance of things hoped for*; while, on the contrary, such is the effect of the contrary fear, that it is well nigh the substance of

things dreaded. Thrice blessed way! where-
in they who walk, anticipate the kingdom of
blessedness, even perfect love, and communion
with saints in glory, with angels, and archangels,
and with the Lord of Glory himself! O my son,
may this hope be always alive in you! may
you constantly, and with a single eye, be look-
ing forwards to the coming of the Son of Man
in clouds and great glory, and to the descent of
those ministering spirits, who shall gather up into
the clouds all them that love his appearance! *For
the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with
a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with
the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall
rise first: then we which are alive, and remain,
shall be caught up together with Him in the
clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall
we be ever with the Lord. Wherefore comfort
one another with these words.*

Theophilus listened with pleasure and de-
light to the exhortations of the Interpreter, and
his heart felt itself enlarged by his discourse.
The instructor of pilgrims now desired him
to propose any question, concerning which he
desired to be informed.

Then did the young man, after some consi-
deration, enquire why the King's high-way
was so full of difficulties; while, on either side
of it were pleasant ways, crowded by pilgrims?

My son, replied the Interpreter, take heed
how thou turn from the way, in which Wis-

dom placeth thee. The right-hand way, which appears to thee so fair, is called Legality; the left-hand way is called Lawlessness. They who are walking in those ways will assuredly perish, unless they measure back their steps, and return to the Wicket-gate. Mark well the way, in which thou must go. At first thou wilt find it to be exceedingly stony and rough; but it will become smoother and more pleasant, the further thou advancest. The very contrary will take place in those smooth ways; they will continually become less easy and pleasant, till they terminate in the precipices of destruction. The pleasures of sin, and the pains of religion, are always decreasing; the pains of sin, and the pleasures of religion, are ever increasing.

THEO. Sir, please to instruct me further in the nature of the way, in which I am to walk.

INTER. This way, my son, is called, *Sanctification*—The stones with which it is cast up, have this wonderful property, that, while the pilgrim's foot rests entirely upon them, no power in heaven nor in earth can shake him; but, if he step on one side, he is exposed to the power of the enemy.

THEO. Do the pilgrims in the other ways know their danger?

INTER. They do not clearly discern the sealed walls, which separate the two ways from the central path; therefore they flatter themselves, that their way will conduct them safely to

the Celestial City, and they boast that they are travelling in the same road which Abraham himself, the father of pilgrims, trod.

THEO. Explain to me, I beseech you, your meaning more fully.

INTER. Learn then, my child, that the King's Son has a great and inveterate enemy, whose name is Formalist. This arch deceiver has, from the beginning, infatuated the multitude, to satisfy themselves with the external appearance and form of the way of life. Alas! *Seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, and walking they walk not.*

THEO. Declare unto me this mystery.

INTER. Know then, that the King, in his good pleasure, has made his way to consist of shadows and substances; of outward and visible forms, and of inward and spiritual graces. They on the right are the very antipodes to the travellers on the left. They on the right are blind to the spiritual way; they on the left pretend to the spiritual way, while they despise the form; but *what God hath joined together* cannot continue in a state of separation.

THEO. Please to relate to me the history of the royal way.

INTER. The father of pilgrims had two sons, who represented two covenants; and he had also a spiritual family, comprehended within another, outwardly righteous; a substance within a shadow; and when it pleased the

King to send his own Son to call all families of the earth to repentance, he adopted all genuine penitents into the spiritual family of the father of pilgrims. Behold the book which Evangelist gave thee, is it not written on the back and likewise within? That which is written on the back is the outward and visible form and shadow of that which is written within. I am the *minister of the spirit, not of the letter; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.*

THEO. I thank thee, good Interpreter, for thy instructions; I now clearly see that the true way comprehends all those, and those only, *who walk by faith, and not by sight.* Instruct me now in the nature of a sanctifying faith; for I read in my book, that to faith only, from first to last, is righteousness revealed. And this doctrine I have frequently heard stigmatized, as of an evil tendency, in the City of Destruction.

INTER. I will explain the important doctrine unto thee, and mark well the explanation. The faith, of which thou readest in thy book as being *the gift of God*, and the appointed means of obtaining the justifying, the sanctifying, the glorifying righteousness, has three marks attending it. *First*, It is a simple reliance upon the King's grace, revealed by his Son, to the exclusion of every degree, as well as kind, of self-dependance. *Secondly*, It is a trust in each and all of his precious promises, relating to the present life, and to that which is to come. *Third-*

ly, It is an abiding reliance on the divine promises, and Covenant of Grace, *by which you are saved, if you keep it in memory.* This is that faith, to which only the gospel annexes salvation; which the blind and unconverted blaspheme, as though it were possible to have such an abiding principle and not to act according to it. But as surely as *faith shall wax strong*, so surely *the work shall follow, and the reward shall be shewed.*

THEO. But is it not possible to love the King and his subjects, upon any other principle?

INTER. By no means; for the Gospel consists of a means and an end; of a principle and of a practice. Beware, I repeat, how you *separate what God hath joined together.* Every man, who knows what the world is, will acknowledge that its principle is pride, and its end self-gratification.—Reverse these two things, and you have the Gospel; humility the principle, and love the practice. *Only by pride cometh contention;* and therefore only by humility cometh love, and fellow-feeling. Thus you see that the characteristic distinction and fundamental principle of the Gospel, is humiliation. The key which openeth all the mysteries of Eternal Wisdom, is no other than the *cross.*

THEO. Good Interpreter, if it may be, give me the clue to this divine book.

INTER. The book may be divided into

three parts, the first of which relates, more especially, to the Law of the King; the second, to faith in the King's only-begotten Son; and the third, to holiness, by the operation of his blessed Spirit.—And, as the whole book, so does every view of the duties required of man, resolve itself into repentance, faith, and holiness, with a respect to those three persons. And what is more to be observed, each of these graces has its separate and particular office, though no one of the three can in verity exist without the other two; as, for instance, strictly speaking, it is faith *only*, not faith *alone*, that justifies. For the mercy, which we receive *by the instrumentality* of faith only, we receive not *by means of*, but *according to* the mercy we ourselves practise.

THEO. I should wish to be able to give the reason why works, wrought in faith, do not, as you say, combine with faith to justify.

INTER. No works of man can endure the severity of God's judgment—Works wrought before faith are not acceptable to God, because *it is impossible without faith to please God*;—and works wrought *in* faith are not properly a man's own works, but *the workmanship of God*; and therefore a man cannot save himself by them. *Thou bearest not the stock, but the stock thee*: and as the branch *must be made good*, before it can bear good fruit, so thou must be righteous, before thou canst produce the fruits of righteousness. This is that faith,

by the hearing of which only thou wilt receive the Spirit, and the sanctifying righteousness which is of the Spirit. Need I say more to convince thee of the importance of the doctrine of justification by faith only?

Now the night was far spent in most interesting and instructive conversation between the Interpreter and Theophilus. The young man's heart burned within him, while the good old man spake to him of the dreadful destruction which was speedily coming upon that city, in which Theophilus had dwelt; and while he conversed with him upon the peace, hope, and joy of those who give their *whole* heart to the King, and who walk with a single eye *in the way which shineth more and more unto the perfect day*; whose happiness increases in the same proportion as they seek, not their own glory, but the glory of their King. Then lifting up his venerable eyes devoutly to heaven, he prayed.—Blessed Father! essential Love! bless this young pilgrim; give him eyes to see, that with thee is the well of life, and the fountain of joy unspeakable; give him grace to cast all his care upon thee, firmly convinced, that with thee is alike the will and the power to raise him from corruption and misery to the supreme perfection and blessedness of his nature. *God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give unto him the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of thee and of thy blessed Son; the eyes*

of his understanding being enlightened, that he may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints.

Spirit of Wisdom, high, divine,
From thy dark pavilion shine,
Whence thy dread oracles, of old,
The kingdom of our God foretold.

Before the golden orb of day
Had shed its bright, primeval ray,
Nor yet was to the heaven display'd
Earth on its mighty pillars laid.

Before all worlds, in secret fold,
The sons of God thy book enroll'd,
Thy sevenfold volume, closely seal'd,
To eye divine alone reveal'd.

In visions of the mystic night,
Thou bad'st enraptur'd prophets write,
While the shade mysterious flies,
Deeply veil'd before their eyes.

When from all nations one select;
Abraham, thy mercy did elect,
Still veil'd in signs he saw the grace
And glory of his *faithful* race.

Another Egypt still behind,
Another Pharaoh was design'd,
Another Son, by Father led,
Seal'd his seed's covenant, and bled.

Thy promise to that nation sure,
Bade them to latest time endure;
For Wisdom no repentance knows,
But everlasting mercy shews.

Another Israel still within,
As freely sav'd from curse and sin,
The olive stock, where grafted stand
The boughs elect from every land.

Another Father, yet the same,
Elects and seals them with his name,
Chosen by him, through his dear Son,
A fairer Canaan have they won.

Spirit of Wisdom, rend the vail,
Receive us in thine inmost pale,
Give eyes to see, and ears to hear,
And thy mystic volume clear.

After this prayer, the Interpreter took bread, and blessed it, and gave it to the young man; and the eyes of Theophilus were opened, and he perceived that flesh and blood had not opened unto him the book of life, and elevated his views beyond the boundary of sight and time to the everlasting hills. The vail was removed from his heart, and he stood like Moses who supplicated to enter into the land of promise, and grieved to behold its glory, and not to have an inheritance therein; until the purple light flashed upon it, and its outward form was transformed into its spiritual substance, when, amazed, he found himself not in the flesh, but in the Spirit.

Theophilus now retired to his apartment; and the next morning awaked, refreshed and recovered from his late extraordinary fatigues. Before he proceeded on his journey, the Interpreter invited him to behold some of the mysteries of

Eternal Wisdom. Theophilus readily accepted the invitation, and was conducted by the wise man into his pleasure-grounds. As they were walking and conversing together, on a sudden the Interpreter called to him to draw back. Theophilus started, and looking up, beheld a vast serpent preparing to dart upon him from a tree. No sooner had he escaped from the threatened destruction, than a young lamb, which had strayed from its fold, became the victim of the serpent's cruel fangs.

INTER. What seest thou, Theophilus?

THEO. Good Interpreter, would that what I now see and feel, I could always have before mine eyes; but please, Sir, to explain to me the full import of this emblem.

INTER. Didst thou observe that deceitful enemy of every creature, lying in wait to surprise his unhappy victim? Didst thou note the fascinating power of his fiery eye, the stupifying effects of his offensive and poisonous breath? Didst thou perceive his double tongue, and the poison under his lips? Didst thou mark well his winding and crooked motion? And above all, didst thou observe the horror which seized the poor lamb, when it felt the serpent's sting? Never forget those convulsions which shook its whole frame, that swelling of every limb, and that starting of the eye-balls from their sockets. Poor lamb! It is too late to give thee relief, and to pour into thy wound that oil of gladness,

which is the only antidote to the venom of death! Theophilus, here is the true picture of sin, and of its frightful author! It stupifies, it encircles, it agonizes its victim, world without end! Dost not thou *now* love him, who came down from his throne to destroy the works of the old serpent? Tell me, now, is not *his yoke easy and his burden light*?

THEO. Blessed Saviour of the world! I *have heard of thee with the hearing of the ear*, but now I see thee, I love thee, and give thee my heart!

INTER. Let us now advance a little further, and converse with the man whom you behold walking in my grounds pensive and meditating.

THEO. May I enquire, Sir, the cause of your abstraction and melancholy?

STRANGER. My son, last night I dreamed a dream—Methought, I beheld a throne of judgment, and one sat thereon, fearful to behold. While I gazed in amazement upon the solemn sight, a criminal was brought before the Judge. Over his head was cast a linen vail, and on either side stood a witness, to testify against him. The prisoner was called upon to lift up his hand, and to plead guilty or not guilty—He pleaded, not guilty. Then I heard the witness proceed to charge the criminal, not with what men regard as a crime, but with the misapplication of his talents, his understanding and his fortune, to his own gratification. Thereupon

the Judge read the Law of responsibility to the King, for the use and improvement of every faculty and possession which is committed to his subjects. Then turning to the Counsellor for the prisoner, who sat on his right-hand, he pronounced, This man is found guilty of misapplying his talents, and the Law condemns him to death: What sayest thou? ought he not to be executed forthwith?

The benign Counsellor replied, O remember mercy, remember mercy, and pointed to a wound in his own side; grant but a short time to this unhappy man, if so be that his eyes may be opened, and he may live henceforwards not to himself, but to thy glory.

Powerful was the intercession of the Advocate, and I saw the vail removed from the eyes of the prisoner; and lo! the prisoner was no other than *myself*—My friends, do you wonder that I am lost in amazement and gratitude? Pray for me, for I am *as a brand plucked out of the fire*;—What I have seen and felt no words can relate;—O that I may have grace to sell all, and go through all the world, and awaken all my fellow-sinners to a sense of their awful responsibility! Verily, each deed, each word, each thought, shall gain increase of everlasting joy or pain!



CHAP. V.



THESE were the principal emblems, which the Interpreter exhibited to Theophilus on the day after his arrival. The next day he conducted him to the edge of a deep pit, in which he beheld two men digging for treasure. One of them, he observed, collected indiscriminately whatever glittering minerals he met with, especially such as were most admired by those who looked on. He was also exceedingly vain of the dimensions and fulness of his earthly vessel, which he stored with these splendid minerals; and while he looked round for applause, he beheld his fellow-workman with great contempt. The latter, on the contrary, examined the minerals with exceeding great attention, and discarded such stones as the former collected. He had in his vessel only a few rough stones and pieces of ore, which excited the constant ridicule of his companion.

While Theophilus was wondering what the emblem signified, the master of the workmen ar-

rived; and causing a great fire to be lighted, he successively cast into the flames the contents of the two vessels. In a moment the fire consumed all the treasure of the former labourer; and he himself was ordered away to punishment. But when the minerals of the latter felt the heat of the flame, their dark and rough exterior disappeared, disclosing to view the purest gold and the most beautiful diamonds; and the workman received a reward accordingly.

These two labourers, said the Interpreter, are Knowledge and Wisdom. Knowledge considered not the end for which he ought to have collected his treasures, nor discerned the means whereby to discover and attain the true riches. Present gratification and applause were all in all to him; and now he is poor and destitute for ever. Wisdom, on the contrary, discerned the right end of learning; and therefore selected that kind of learning, which should attain the end proposed, and continue undiminished when even the heaven and the earth shall pass away with fire unextinguishable. By faith he made the Wisdom of the All-wise his own, the practical science of love towards God and towards man. Now *that* knowledge which is perfect is come to him, and his jewels shew their genuine lustre; and the only effect of eternity upon them, will be, that they will shine brighter, and more bright, world without end.

The Interpreter now invited him to behold

a model of the Celestial Temple, to which he was travelling. So they walked together, and Heavenly-Wisdom accompanied them. At length they arrived within view of the stately building, which was being erected.

Now I saw a numerous company of workmen, employed in hewing and shaping stones, and in bringing them to the builders, who were appointed to station them in the wall. I also observed, that within the outer court was contained an inner but smaller edifice. I noticed also, that the builders of the outer wall received whatever materials were brought to them, without discrimination; and that their design appeared to be, to render the external appearance of their building as like as possible to that of the inner court.

While Theophilus was engaged in surveying the outer court, before he had discovered the interior edifice, the Interpreter enquired of him, whether he thought that what he was then beholding could be the temple of the Living God? I am surprised, replied the young man, with many things which I now behold. Good Interpreter, I would gladly learn the import of this emblem. Look, replied his conductor, and notice that the builders, whom you see, raise their walls to a vast and proud elevation with great rapidity. Behold, how many persons, captivated by the grandeur, decorations, and loftiness, of the edifice, labour in working out

materials for them. But observe withal, that the foundation of the wall consists of the sand of the sea, and that it is raised upon many waters. The stones likewise with which the wall is constructed are neither squared nor cleansed from the earth, out of which they were dug. Yea, beholdest thou not how that slime is used for mortar, and being mixed with blood, forms the cement of the wall? But what most remarkably deserves attention is, that the builders apply not the plummet and the line, in order to build perpendicularly from earth to heaven. My son, this is not the temple of the Israel of God, and the house of Isaac; it is the court of the carnal Israel, the house of Ishmael the son of Hagar. The King in his supreme wisdom, which is far above the thoughts of these men, suffers them to build their towering edifice day by day to a greater elevation; while they fondly boast, that they have overtopped and eclipsed the heavenly Jerusalem, and while they suspect not the consequence of neglecting the upright, heaven-ward direction of their temple, but suffer it to incline towards the earth.

Scarcely had the Interpreter spoken these words, than there was heard a shout of triumph from the wall, and a call to the workmen to raise the last and most superb stone to the summit of the most elevated tower of the temple; and the prince of the builders proudly exclaimed, *Is not this great Babylon which I have*

builded? Then I beheld the builders of the interior edifice, who were employed in hewing out and carrying stones, white, square, and sealed, were struck with dismay, when they heard this voice of triumph, and became objects of ridicule and oppression to the architects of the outer court. But behold, at this critical moment, when the outer wall was receiving its final decorations and consummation; and while the last great stone, inscribed with the title, *Eternity!* was now being elevated, and all the friends of the King were sinking in despair—the wall suddenly lost its centre of gravity, and was precipitated with a most tremendous crash to the ground, and *not one stone was left upon another that was not cast down.* Also I saw that certain of the builders of the outer wall, when they perceived that it was falling by its own weight, suddenly changed their appearance, by dropping certain masks with which they had disguised their faces; and disclosing the furious countenances of destroying demons, exerted all their force to precipitate the building to the ground with such violence and concussion, as might overwhelm and crush the inner court.

Then spake the Interpreter to Theophilus, Tell me, my son, what is it that thou now seest?

I see, replied Theophilus, that Babylon is fallen, is fallen, completely, eternally fallen. I now understand, that it was suffered to be heaped up unto the heaven, only that its fall and crash

might be at once consummated. *O Babylon, thou art sunk like lead in the deep waters, and thou shalt no more be found at all—But the foundation of God standeth sure—I see the temple of the Living God, I see the house built upon the rock, the heavenly Jerusalem.*

This, rejoined the Interpreter, is that which our Lord foretold concerning those false prophets in sheep's clothing, who *build their house upon the sand—Now that the rain descendeth, the floods come, and beat upon that house, it falleth, and great is the fall thereof—*Be assured, then, that the day will come, when the building of the great God shall be made manifest unto all men, by standing alone unshaken and uneclipsed, amidst the wars of every contending element. *Rise now, my son, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. And I heard the number of them that had been sealed, and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the Israel of God. After this I beheld, and lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, were built upon the foundation of Jesus Christ, the prophets, the apostles, and the witnesses of the Lamb.—And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluiah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.*

The Interpreter would next have Theophi-

lus to see the King's state prison, in which the debtors to the crown were shut up, and confined in fetters. It was a dungeon dreadful to behold, from which there was no possibility of escape by cunning or violence. These wretched persons were *all their life long in bondage*, and tortured *by the fear of death*; expecting ere long to be cast into a pit lower than the grave.

While Theophilus was gazing with horror upon this miserable place of confinement, behold, a messenger arrived from the King, blowing a trumpet, *proclaiming liberty to the captives*, and bearing the offer of a free, full, and everlasting remission of their debts, and of a restoration to wealth and honour, purchased for them, and presented to them as a free gift by the Prince, the heir of the Sovereign.

The eyes of Theophilus beamed with joy, and he looked in expectation of a burst of transport and gratitude from all the prisoners; but, to his great surprise, he beheld the act of royal grace spurned by the greater number. Some few however he had the pleasure of seeing unchained, raised from the earth, cleansed, and being clothed in the King's best robe, mount the royal chariots, which waited to convey them to their King's presence. These men gave glory with their whole heart to the King's free grace, and departed, lauding and magnifying his mercy, and confessing their own utter vileness and helplessness. Theophilus was now desirous to

know why the other prisoners rejected the act of grace. So, by the Interpreter's direction, he drew nigh to the dungeon of misery, and overheard the prisoners, in the following manner canvassing the nature of the offer made to them.

First spake the prisoner Self-sufficiency, and said, For my part, I scorn this delusory proposal. Let us not be drawn in to disgrace ourselves, and become more abject slaves than we already are, by acknowledging ourselves dependants upon an act of grace for our freedom; for assuredly we are born free, and liberty is our birth-right.

Then spake the prisoner Self-deceiver, For my part, I am well pleased that the King requires no trouble from me. I mean therefore to close with his offer of delivery, and to sleep away the time till the next blast of the trumpet puts me in full possession of my liberty.

Fools, exclaimed a prisoner, who was called Free-will, but whose real name was Bond-will, after perusing again and again the royal act, I have at last penetrated into its meaning. The true interpretation of the act will vindicate the King's intentions, and save our credit. His meaning is, that, if we will pay him all that still remains in our possession, and bestir ourselves well to break these chains, he will reward our best endeavours, and render them effectual for restoration to our birth-right. There is nothing in all this unworthy of the dignity of our

family, and nothing derogatory to the character of the King. Then did Free-will bestir himself to break his chains, and vindicate the dignity of human nature; but I beheld, that the more he struggled, the firmer his chains seemed to be bound about him.

Then said the Interpreter to Theophilus, Understandest thou now the words of thy Lord, *For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see; and that they which see, might be made blind?* I will now shew thee the folly of this proud reasoner.

Who, by a part, will judge the whole,
Has lost his reason, and his soul.

Natural reason judgeth of the counsel of God by a partial view; but illuminated reason remembers its own limits and imperfections, and receiveth implicitly the judgment of Him, who seeth the end from the beginning, and vieweth at once every link in his whole scheme. The fly which creepeth round the house of God, and, from the sight of a speck, presumeth to define the form of the whole edifice, is less silly and presumptuous than these men, who see, comparatively, much less of the design of infinite Wisdom, and yet arraign the proceedings of the All-wise, and explain away the mysteries of the kingdom, in order to bring the great mystery of godliness to the level of their own puny

intellects. To thee be it a sufficient proof that their views are false, because they are level to human reason. For he that seeth in part, and he that seeth in perfection, cannot but have far different views. To which of them wilt thou give credit? My son, the wisdom of mortals seeth but in part, and knoweth but in part; and therefore should rely by faith upon the judgment of Him who seeth in perfection. Until the day of perfect vision arrive, seek not thou to fathom the deep and impenetrable *theory* of the counsel of the Most High. The *practical part* is as plain as the *theory* is mysterious. See and receive the great truths of the Gospel, in that light, in which it has pleased the All-wise to state them; ascribing *all that is evil* in thee to thyself, and *all that is good* in thee, to free distinguishing grace. Speak the language of prophets and apostles, and feel what they felt, when they cried, *Turn thou me, O Lord, and I shall be turned; By the grace of God I am what I am.* Verily, every good and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of change. Of his own will begat he thee; and keep thou that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith. Grace be with thee!

These were some of the signs and wonders,

which the Interpreter shewed to Theophilus during his stay at his house; for it pleased Heavenly-Wisdom, that the young pilgrim should continue some time with the venerable seer. These were precious hours to the young man, and seemed to elevate his views far beyond the narrow horizon of earthly men. Here likewise he conversed with many wise and good pilgrims, who visited the Interpreter, during his abode with him. At length the time came that he should quit the Interpreter's hospitable roof, when the good old man blessed him, and warn him not to be puffed up with the knowledge he had received; for, said he, remember that *knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.*

Theophilus now proceeded on his way, absorbed in reflection upon the wonderful things which he had seen at the house of the Interpreter. Surely, said he within himself, now *my rock is so strong that I shall never be moved*; I feel now, as if my conviction of the reality of the world of glory were more than *the evidence of things not seen*, it is now *the substance of things hoped for*.—O Thou, who *didst endure as beholding him that is invisible*, how was it, that thou couldst desire to abide in the earthly Canaan, rather than to enter into that glorious holy land, where rivers of pleasure pour their living waters from the throne of God and the Lamb; and where the flocks are pastured by their divine Shepherd in the little vallies, and rest

together, in halcyon peace and calm delight,
under the willows of the brook, or beneath the
cedars of God?



CHAP. VI.



WHILE the young man was reflecting upon the illuminated views which he had attained at the house of the Interpreter, enjoying the sunshine with which he was favoured, full of confidence that he should hold out to the end, and heedless whether Heavenly-Wisdom was accompanying him or not—a female approached, in loose attire, with several companions. You are travelling, said she, all alone, and need refreshment: my house is by the way-side, and I shall be happy to afford you the delights which it is in my power to bestow upon such as are wearied with pilgrimage.

THEO. Madam, may I ask your name?

THE LADY. My name is Pleasure.

THEO. But I am forbidden, to follow Pleasure.

THE LADY. If you are forbidden, as you say, you may leave my house, whenever you please; and I can assure you, that your present and certain delights will far exceed any possi-

ble pains, which you may undergo in making your peace with the King.

THEO. But I shall expose myself to shame and reproach, if it should be known that I have been allured by thee to turn aside out of the way.

THE LADY. You are here among friends, and it will never be known by any human being that you have abode at my house. Come with me, for I perceive you are inclined to do so: hear also what my two companions have to say.

MRS. DOUBTING. My young friend, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Is it so certain that there is a place of eternal condemnation to the lovers of pleasure, as that you should forego the loss of present and certain delights, in order to escape it? Are there not a great variety of opinions upon this subject? And what if there is a remote danger? Is not he the only wise man, who first enjoys this present life; and then, by submitting to a short repentance, is made happy both here and hereafter?

MRS. INTEMPERANCE. There is reason in what these fair ladies say; but, if you incline not to follow our advice, and to pay us a visit, allow me to pour you out a glass of this sparkling wine; you will certainly find yourself refreshed by it. A cloud came over the mind of Theophilus; so he yielded to the allurements of the seducing females, and turned aside from the King's high way to the house of the ladies.

And now the young man, who had hitherto found, in the midst of his outward troubles, inward peace and hope, instantly experienced that *in the midst of outward laughter there is inward heaviness*. He felt the pangs of a wounded spirit. The Lady Pleasure, aware of his dejection, exerted still more her fascinating powers; in consequence of which, the arguments of Mrs. Doubting appeared to have great weight: while Mrs. Intemperance rendered the weapons of the two former ladies absolutely irresistible.

The next morning Theophilus waked, stung with remorse and disgust—A voice from within seemed to utter, *What dost thou here, Theophilus? Canst thou in this place offer any petitions to God? Him, in whom thou livest, movest, and hast thy being, thou art provoking to extremity. Canst thou bear thine own thoughts? Canst thou endure thine own self? Shalt thou not speedily be put to open shame, and be made the laughing-stock of thy old companions? The young man being now cut to the quick, was just determining to escape for his life; when the ladies again made their appearance. The Lady Pleasure appeared more invincible, by means of the first advantage which she had gained. The Lady Doubting suggested, that he had already considered the weight of her arguments, and dispassionately concluded, that it is folly to sacrifice present and certain pleasures, to future and contingent ones. And the Lady Intempe-*

rance enquired of him, whether her cup had not yesterday drowned all his uneasiness? Theophilus deliberated, forgetful that he who would overcome, must *flee youthful lusts*, but that he who deliberates is lost. He seized the sparkling cup, and again fell under the dominion of his seducers. And thus for some time, morning after morning he awoke, stung with inward remorse and shame; becoming every day, less able to resist the blandishments of the Lady Pleasure, the sophistry of the Lady Doubting, and the cup of the Lady Intemperance.

Now it came to pass, by the merciful appointment of the King, that after Theophilus had remained some time in the snare of the enemy, one night he dreamed a dream. In visions of the night he beheld, as before, the three ladies, who had beguiled him, approach and bid him follow them. So he followed in their train, and they led him to a beautiful and delicious garden of oranges and citrons, where all seemed to be enchantment. He gathered of the flowers, and they withered in his hand; he plucked the fruit, and it decayed before he could taste it—While thus employed, in a moment the spell was dissolved, and he found himself in a solitary and barren wilderness, surrounded by a dark and gloomy mist. Instead of the three ladies, there stood before him three fiends, dreadful to behold, who suddenly springing upon him, dragged him after them, and he had no strength to

resist. He looked round, and cried out for one to assist him; but no one answered him: only a voice was heard in the air, *If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation to devour the ungodly.* Thus was he dragged to the mouth of the bottomless pit, where he beheld the flames bursting forth with impetuous fury, and tremendous roar. A vast serpent raised his head from amidst the flames, and opened his dreadful jaws. In a moment the monster seized his prey, and hurried him into the pit of darkness, suffocation, and agony. The mouth of the bottomless pit was instantly closed, and a voice exclaimed, *It is done—He that is filthy let him be filthy still.* The agony of Theophilus was indescribable, and he awoke bedewed with tears. His sins rushed upon his mind in all their aggravations and horrors; while he felt transported with joy that it was but a dream.

He rose up speedily, and rushed out of the house of the seducers: but the hour was the hour of midnight, and he knew not which way to direct his steps, in order to escape to the King's highway. The moon, it shone not in the heavens, the stars gave no light, but black clouds overspread the canopy of heaven. In the agony of his mind however he could not but proceed, and endeavour to escape from

the vicinity of the house of his seducers. He speedily found himself in a thick forest, while a tempest of wind and rain fell upon him. Still he advanced, and, as he proceeded, cried for mercy in the deepest agony and despair.

Now it was so ordered that, having ascended a little eminence, and looked round repeatedly, he believed he saw a faint glimmering light at a great distance. A ray of hope sprung up in his mind when he beheld the light, and he determined to make for it. But alas, when he had advanced a little way, the ground declined, and he descended into a deep glen, from whence he could no longer behold the object of his pursuit.

And now the thunder began to roar, and the lightning to flash; and the howlings of wild beasts were heard in the forest, ever and anon rushing through the bushes on his right and on his left. Still he advanced, crying, Mercy, till he gained a second summit, from which he beheld the same light, somewhat more distinct and near. Again he descended into the depths of the forest; and was now so fatigued and exhausted with his exertions, that he could with difficulty ascend the next summit. He was enabled however to advance, though slowly, and at length beheld the light, flaming as it were from a beacon. As yet no word but *Mercy* could be found to express the sensations of his soul. With a broken and contrite heart, and

with a far different opinion of himself than that with which he left the house of the Interpreter, he approached the burning and shining light. It was *The Royal Cross*, which now blazed like a beacon upon the young pilgrim. He approached it, he fell prostrate upon his face, and confessed and denied not, I am dead in trespasses and sins; like a sheep I have gone astray. Now, now do I look for *mercy* with a single eye, and feel, by bitter experience, that *of myself I can do nothing*;—that *in my flesh dwelleth no good thing*; but that thou, O blessed Saviour, who didst suffer on this cross, art *all in all*, the whole and sole author of life.—O let thy blood, if it be possible, cleanse me from my great and aggravated transgressions, and wash away my guilt. *I repent in dust and ashes*; O Lord, take not thy Holy Spirit from me!

Thus did Theophilus pour forth his sorrows before the Royal Cross, persevering in prayer; and he persisted not in vain; but at length received an answer of peace, and experienced the transporting revival of hope in his bosom. Nevertheless he now felt a measure of self-abasement, and self-renunciation, to which he had hitherto been a stranger. He *rejoiced with trembling*, and read the inscriptions upon the Royal Cross with a mixture of terror and consolation. The Royal Cross consisted of two great beams, the one horizontal and parallel to the earth; the other, pointing from earth to heaven.

On the former beam was described on tablets of stone what fallen man is by nature, and what the sentence of the law pronounces against him. The latter beam cut the former asunder, *and crossed out the hand writing of condemnation, and the letter which killeth.* It was inscribed with the finger of God; and the emblem of a bleeding heart ever burning but never consumed, on which were written the spiritual characters of the Divine Law, was nailed unto it. This upright beam seemed to shoot from earth to heaven, and its summit appeared to be lost in the clouds.

Here Theophilus beheld all that is esteemed and valued by men, described upon the horizontal beam, and cut asunder by the upright one. And here he began more fully to comprehend these sayings in his book, *I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then am I strong:* for hitherto they had appeared paradoxical to him. But he here beheld every thing temporal crossed out by something spiritual, corresponding, and exceedingly surpassing in excellency. Round the Royal Cross he beheld also a vine entwined, with purple grapes abundantly suspended from it. The sight of this delicious fruit excited his hunger and his thirst; and confessing his own unworthiness, he ate of the tree of life, and drank of the blood of the grape, and his spirit revived within him.

Thus refreshed and composed, the young pilgrim fell into a sweet and tranquil sleep at the foot of the cross. And in his sleep he dreamed that the King appeared unto him in glory, and with him his long lost parents, clothed in white and shining raiment; and a voice from heaven came unto him, saying, *Come up hither*: and he looked, and beheld the cross as it had been a ladder reaching to the clouds with this inscription, *No man cometh unto the Father but by me.*

The sun at length arose, casting its first beams upon the mountain, when Theophilus awakened, and once more fixing his eyes upon the Royal Cross, thus expressed the lively emotions of his heart—

When Sinai's thunder conscience feels,
And secret sins its flash reveals,
While angels of destruction stand,
And the sting of torture brand;

What then avail our wealth or power,
At this dread, terrific hour?
All trust in human worth and might
Flies like an arrow from the sight.

O then, what transport to behold,
Chosen from the royal fold,
The Lamb, almighty to efface
The sins of all our guilty race!

Thou to the Royal Cross art led,
Prince of the living and the dead;

In wisdom, power, and truth complete,
With every foe beneath thy feet.

While we view the Saviour die,
All our sorrows to him fly ;
All his righteousness is shed,
In return, upon our head.

While we eye our bleeding King,
Our deserts on him we fling,
And his fulness he imparts
To our broken contrite hearts.

See, in him, our glory rise
Far above the lofty skies ;
While, in us, the earth he rends,
And to lowest hell descends.

Hail! thou Royal Cross, once more ;
Who thy wonders shall explore ?
Angels bow to view such grace,
And, lost in wonder, veil their face.



CHAP. VII.



THEOPHILUS now proceeded on his journey; but he had not advanced far, before he heard the voice of one calling to him: when turning round, he beheld an old friend and companion, whose name was Philadelphus, treading in his steps and hastening to overtake him. Theophilus received his dear friend with joy, and thus addressed him—Dear Philadelphus, how I rejoice to see you: little did I think, that you would ever be persuaded to undertake the pilgrimage to Mount Sion.

PHIL. My brother, do not upbraid me; forgive me my past unkindness and bitterness towards you. O how have I since most eagerly desired to implore your forgiveness!—My friend, I saw the anguish of thy heart, when leaving the place of thy nativity, thou wentest forth, not knowing whither thou shouldst fly for thy life—I joined in ridiculing and calumniating the work of God wrought in thy soul—I provoked thee, I persecuted thee,

and strove to the utmost to turn thee from thy purpose, and so to destroy thee; but I did it in ignorance: forgive me, O my brother, forgive the cruelty of thy friend.

THEO. I forgive thee, my friend, from my heart; and I rejoice unspeakably to see thee once more, and to receive thee as a brother beloved for ever: but tell me, what occasioned thine own change of disposition, and put thee upon pilgrimage?

PHIL. When my dear companion was gone, and I saw him no more, I began coolly to reflect upon my cruelty to him, and upon the meekness and love, with which he patiently received every shaft of enmity. I thought too of all his admonitions to me to escape for my life, and of the sayings which he repeated to me out of his book. And these my sensations became stronger every day; and, in particular, this reflection dwelt upon my mind, that there must have been some extraordinary cause for that remarkable change, which took place in your disposition and manners, after you betook yourself to prayer and to reading of your book. For you not only became different in these respects to us, but to what you yourself before had been. Instead of that pride and selfishness which, you know, we all shewed as far as we dared; you appeared to possess humility, love, courteousness, and tenderness. Now this disposition was very winning, and of a nature so totally different to all

that I and all your old companions felt and practised, that it made me marvel and consider, that so good an effect must have as good a cause: and I must say, that we all felt an impression of this kind upon our minds. Upon this account, I at last determined secretly to go to Evangelist, and request him to give me a book: which he did in the same tender spirit, and with words which I had heard you use; the recollection of which, drew tears from my eyes. So I took the book home: not daring however to be seen reading it by my old friends, and especially by the young men, Profane, Scoffer, and Hate-good, I retired out of the city in the dusk of the evening in order to read and meditate without interruption. So I chose to retire on that side of the city on which you went away for the last time: and I had the secret pleasure of being reminded of you, as well as of enjoying greater retirement; because, you know, it was a very unfrequented place.

So by degrees I ventured further and further, every evening, from the city; when, one evening to my great surprise, as I was reading in my book these words, *Charity suffereth long and is kind*,—I was struck with the thought that this saying was the cause of that sweet change which I had beheld in you. At this moment, to my great astonishment, when darkness was coming upon our city, I perceived the sky luminous over the place to which I had advanced; and I

beheld at a distance, a fair hill, with a beacon upon its summit. At the same time, I felt myself drawn onwards, as it were by some invisible power: yet I hesitated to proceed, and began to consider whether I should not return now to the city, and come again another day; supposing that I had much time before me. But, as I turned my eyes back on the City of Destruction, I saw rolling over it clouds of unusual blackness and horror, I saw also the appearance of sparks of fire falling from them; and presently one of the houses in the city was in a blaze. This seemed a warning to me not to return; and so I determined to make for the beacon upon the hill.

THEO. But did you not meet with many difficulties in your way, before you arrived at the Wicket-gate?

PHIL. One called Self-knowledge presently came to me, and informed me, that he was sent by the King to be my conductor to that place: but, in truth, as we journeyed together across the Plain of Repentance, he shewed me myself so plainly in a mirror, which he had brought with him, that I began to think it vain for me to shew my face before the King. I thought I should have sunk into the earth, when I first saw myself in that glass.

THEO. Why, how did you appear to yourself?

PHIL. My brother, it seemed nothing human that I saw; it was more like the picture of

an evil spirit; and besides, I saw a great chain round the neck of my likeness.

THEO. But did Self-knowledge give you no comfort?

PHIL. When he saw me overpowered with the view of myself, he withdrew his glass, and pointed to the beacon upon the hill, and bade me look through a telescope.

THEO. And what did you then see?

PHIL. Why I beheld a man, *clothed with a garment down to the feet. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his countenance was as the sun, when he shineth in his strength.* Then said my guide, This is the Son of God, who became the Son of Man; that thou through him mightest become the child of God. Then I received comfort, and eagerly desired to reach that blessed place, where the second Adam, for so my guide called him, was standing.

THEO. But were you admitted without interrogation?

PHIL. No, my brother; I thought that the questions that were put to me would have cut me asunder. I felt, as it were, myself and all that is within me, sink under me like rottenness, and I fell to the earth as dead. *There remained no strength in me; for my comeliness was turned into corruption, and I retained no strength.* And behold, a hand touched me, which set me upon my knees, and upon the palms of my hands.

THEO. Didst thou know who it was that raised thee from the dust, and infused spiritual life into thy soul?

PHIL. I knew not, till he said unto me, *Fear not, I am the resurrection and the life; the first and the last; he that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.*

THEO. My brother, it was the Lord of Glory himself, that had compassion on thee, and said to thy dry bones, *Live*; and blessed be his holy name, *all things are now become new unto thee.* Thou hast not only the promise, but the earnest of eternal life.

PHIL. Explain thy meaning, my brother.

THEO. The church militant is the pattern and earnest of the church in glory, and the image of the kingdom of heaven; the subjects of it must, in a degree, even now, *be dead in the flesh but alive in the spirit; born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* I have been assured by the good Interpreter, that all things in our whole pilgrimage correspond to, and introduce the eternal and spiritual consummation of blessedness; but let us remember, that our flesh is not yet dead; though, we trust, it has received its deadly wound. Though we mortify and destroy one corruption, its destruction will only serve to reveal another: let us beware of carnal security. *He that endureth unto the end the same shall be*

saved. Let us therefore watch over one another, and help one another in the way, since it has pleased the King, in his infinite mercy, to restore us to each other.

PHIL. I much need thy advice, my brother, as thou art older and more experienced than myself.

THEO. Since thou hast commenced pilgrim, my friend, earlier in life than myself, return thanks to Him who hath called thee so young. I question not, but the good Shepherd has a special care of his lambs; and that he has remarkably protected and guided thee hitherto. Thy way has been less exposed to snares than mine, because of thy youth: and as surely as thou hast *remembered thy Creator in the days of thy youth*; so surely, *when thou art old, he will not depart from thee.*

Thus did these young pilgrims proceed on their way conversing sweetly together, and enquiring of each other what had befallen them, before their meeting. I beheld then that they went on till they came to the foot of the hill Difficulty, where *they drank of the water of life freely.* Afterwards they ascended the hill as far as to the pleasant harbour, made by the Lord of the hill for the refreshment of weary travellers. Having rested there a short time, they ascended till they came to where the lions were stationed; when the good porter, Watchful, seeing the young pilgrims, encouraged them to advance,

and shut up the wild beasts in their dens, saying, Believe only, and thus shall all your adversaries be able only to roar and menace. He then invited them to lodge that night at the house of the Sisters, whose good-will to pilgrims is so well known. Who, that ever travelled this road, has not heard the praises of Piety, Charity, Wisdom, and Discretion? Need I relate with what pleasure these good Sisters received the young travellers, and how welcome they were made?

Now I saw that after Theophilus and Philadelphus had received refreshment, the Sisters enquired the reasons which had influenced them to fly from the city of their nativity, and become *strangers and pilgrims upon earth*. They would also be informed, what road they had taken, and what occurrences they had met with. And having heard their relation of the mercies and deliverances which they had experienced, they took occasion to discourse with them on the duty and blessedness of thankfulness to the God of all mercy and deliverance. And in this manner Charity expressed her own thoughts, as well as those of her Sisters, upon this delightful subject. I perceive, my young friends, that you have infinite cause to magnify the goodness of your King, who hath awakened you to a sense of your dreadful danger, and brought you safely from the City of Destruction thus far towards the heavenly Jerusalem.

Need I remind you then, that these unspeakable benefits should be gratefully acknowledged by you with heartfelt praise and thanksgiving? Remember, that to supplication should always be added a thankful acknowledgment of the answers to prayer already received. *O praise the Lord, for it is a good thing to sing praises unto our God: yea a joyful and pleasant thing it is to be thankful.*

It is *a good thing*, because the Lord hath commanded you *in all things by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, to make your requests known unto him; and to rejoice in him evermore.*

It is *a good thing* to rejoice in the Lord, because it both evidences and promotes a reliance upon his saving power and promises. For who can really possess an interest in the divine righteousness and promises, and not rejoice and be thankful?

And it is *a good thing* to rejoice in the Lord, because herein is another high exercise of faith. The eye of the natural mind is confined to the near and unsatisfactory objects of sight; and beholds, either not at all, or in miniature, the immense objects of eternity. But the eye of faith brings every object into sight and proportion; it penetrates within the vail, and presents the pilgrim with that prospect, which only can excite solid joy and thankfulness.

And need I add then, that it is *a pleasant thing* also to be thankful; and by gaining a

view, not of a part, but of the whole of your high destiny, to find the drop of present bitterness lost in the sea of bliss which is set before you; the momentary pains of pilgrimage absorbed in an eternity of joy; and to feel that, however clouded and darkened for an instant, nevertheless, the path of pilgrims is, in truth, *as the light which shineth more and more unto perfect day.*

Upon this subject the Sisters discoursed with the young pilgrims; and before they retired to rest, they instructed them to express their gratitude continually to their blessed Creator and Redeemer, in the following words.

Bless our Creator's wondrous name,
Who from the dust call'd forth our frame;
Form'd us, an everlasting race,
To share his bliss, and view his face.

Bless our Preserver's wondrous love,
Which warn'd in kindness, and in patience strove;
While others soon struck down to hell,
Yet not more vile, in torments dwell.

Bless too our Benefactor's power,
For blessings of the present hour;
The kingdom first of grace to mind,
Each earthly promise is to find.

Bless now beyond creative love,
And preservation far above,
God, our Redeemer's boundless grace,
Which sav'd our hateful ruin'd race.

Bless the enlightening Spirit's ray,
Which points the Pilgrim's only way;

The sanctifying Spirit's hand,
Which draws us to the holy land.

Spirit of comfort, be thou bless'd,
Who bid'st the mournful bosom rest,
Who dwellest in the contrite heart,
And hope of glory dost impart.

How good and pleasant 'tis to sing
The praises of our Heavenly King!
His grace extoll'd, our bliss we count,
And feel o'erjoy'd its vast amount.

The next morning the Sisters invited Theophilus and his companion to see the memorials of the pilgrims of other times, concerning whom it was the will of their Lord, that *being dead they should yet speak*, and beckon the living to follow them to victory. So the young travellers were conducted to an ancient and solemn edifice; in which they beheld very many pictures of departed saints, *all of whom were honoured in their generations and were the glory of their times, still leaving a name behind them, that their glory might be reported*. Here were represented many blessed persons, of whom their beloved King himself had caused the memorial to be set up, according to his own directions. Among all these, the eyes of the young men were particularly attracted to the representations of such, as at an early age *had finished their course with joy*.

Here they beheld with much interest a picture, in which they saw a very young man cast

into a deep pit by his envious brethren; and afterwards suffering, with patience and resignation, a severe course of afflictions and temptation. Then they viewed with delight the long-delayed glory descending upon his head; and beheld his brethren bow the knee before him, and crave life and sustenance at his hands.

Here they saw a lively representation of the child of an afflicted, but pious mother, ministering at the solemn hour of midnight in the courts of the Lord's house. The child was girded with a linen ephod, and was clothed with a little coat, the work of his mother. He stood, as though he heard a voice from the sanctuary, a call from the Holy of Holies; yea as though the Lord God was calling him to his presence. Hard by was represented an aged priest lamenting the ruin which he had brought upon his own house, by *withholding the rod of chastisement from his sons*.

Here also they beheld a young shepherd, *strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, rending a lion and a bear; and cutting off the head of a gigantic enemy. And, at a little distance, was represented his child, kneeling down and praying for wisdom from above; and Heavenly-Wisdom herself descending from on high, and shedding upon him all her treasures.

Here likewise was to be seen the memorial of the Son of the Celestial King himself, in his early youth, conversing with the teachers of Israel,

and astonishing them with his wisdom and answers.

They were also much delighted with the picture of a little child employed in reading the scriptures, by which he was *made wise unto salvation*, and in praying for grace to order, from the beginning, his life and conversation according to the will of the Most High.

Having surveyed the memorials of ancient times, they now proceeded to representations of *strangers and pilgrims upon earth*, some of whom had not very long since received a beautiful crown at the hand of their King. Among these they beheld a young prince restoring to a great nation the everlasting Gospel, on which was inscribed, *That which ye receive now, hold fast till I come*; but while engaged in the act of reformation he was caught up into glory. When suddenly the face of the sky was overspread with clouds and tempests; the land was covered with sadness and horror; and many a faithful servant of the King was seen sealing his testimony with his blood. Among these stood conspicuous, a young and noble female, eminent alike for piety and wisdom. The chariot and horses of Israel stood ready to receive her immortal and triumphant spirit, and the crown of life over her head was suspended in glory.

After this, they proceeded to the extremity of the building, where their attention was excited

by a recent and beautiful painting. The two parents of an only child, on either side holding him by the hand, were leading him forth from the City of Vanity, and directing his eyes towards the Delectable Mountains. These heavenly-minded parents were represented, in successive views, anxiously and indefatigably watching and tending their little charge, and removing every stumbling-block out of his way. It was delightful to behold the promises to pious and vigilant parents, who in full reliance upon the divine faithfulness train up their offspring in the way they should go, here verified and confirmed. The delicate bud was seen quickly expanding into a beautiful blossom; and the sweet blossom as soon was succeeded by the fair and mature fruits of the Spirit; and being selected by the hand of the King of Glory himself, the tender plant was speedily removed to more congenial soil in the paradise of God. Excellent parents! exclaimed Theophilus, and do you not rejoice in having so soon attained your heart's desire? in having yourselves witnessed the joyful conclusion of his course? Would you prefer to leave him behind you as poor Theophilus has been left; uncertain whether he should follow you to glory and dwell with you for ever? Would you pluck the crown of glory from his head, and recall him from the bosom of his Father and his God? Rather rejoice, exceedingly rejoice, as well in his blessedness, as in this, that

you have been privileged to be the instruments and witnesses of that blessedness.

Your remarks, my son, replied the Sister Piety, are founded in truth. And I will add, that young persons, like yourselves, should be reminded by the example of that young pilgrim, of what attainments through grace you are capable; and how soon you may be summoned into the presence of your King and Judge. Here too may the parents of young pilgrims learn, that, *if they believe, all things are possible to him that believeth*; yea, that all the promises of the covenant of glory shall be confirmed to their children after them, if they have faith to receive the inestimable blessing.

Theophilus and Philadelphus now returned to the hospitable mansion of the Sisters, sweetly and solemnly impressed with the recollection of the memorials of other ages and generations. In the evening the Sisters renewed their conversation with them—We render thanks, they said, to the great Author and Finisher of salvation, that he has been pleased to call you to the inheritance of glory and immortality at so early an age. We trust that *that door which no man can shut*, standeth open to receive you; but we would have you to remember, that your final attainment of the promises depends upon your making your calling and election sure by the *Practical Piety*, which you will learn from us. If therefore you would attain to those exceeding great

and precious promises, that *by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust, you must give all diligence to add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness charity. For if ye do these things, ye shall never fall, for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Then did each of the Sisters in turn speak a word of exhortation to the young men; and first Piety addressed them in the following words. My name signifies the Love of God; and I put you now in remembrance, that this is the first and greatest of all the commandments, *That thou love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength.* If any say unto thee, *Thou art righteous over much;* rehearse unto him the words which I have just now repeated. And if any say unto thee, that they love their neighbour, and trust that they shall be accepted for moral virtue; reply unto them, *By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments.*

Then did Charity speak as follows. My name signifies the Love of God extending itself to all his creatures, as the rays which pro-

ceed from the fountain of solar light illuminate the whole habitable world. All that is not wrought by love, proceeds from vanity, and terminates in vanity. Remember that charity is not the cause, but the effect and evidence of salvation and union with the great Head of the church. All other attainments shall be swallowed up in the perfection of the kingdom of glory; but charity shall remain as an everlasting crown upon the head of believers world without end. *Follow after charity.*

Then did the third of the Sisters take up the word of exhortation, saying, My name is Wisdom. Before the foundation of the world Wisdom was with God, and Wisdom was God. Wisdom ordained and beheld, at one glance, all things natural and moral that should ever come into existence, from eternity to eternity. Every thing by her was fitted to its proper end; and the end, which she ordained for each, it shall surely fulfil. By the inspiration of Wisdom, while the world knew not God, nor could search out perfect righteousness, the prophets and apostles of old were instructed to reveal truth to all conditions of men, authoritatively, self-evidently, and effectually. By the same Almighty Power were they inspired also *to speak wisdom among them that are perfect*, even among those who being grown in grace, and having spiritual eyes to see, and spiritual ears to hear, were become capable of receiving the higher mysteries of

the kingdom. Lay thou thy foundation upon Jesus Christ; and in due time he will unfold unto thee the higher mysteries of his kingdom, which the *eye of the natural man hath not seen, nor his ear heard*; and whatever difficulties may now appear unto thee in his word, be assured that it is because thou art not yet *perfect*. But the day will come, if thou now receivest by faith the precepts of the All-Wise, that thou shalt acknowledge that God only is wise, good, and lovely, in all and every part of his conduct towards all his creatures.

Lastly, Discretion addressed the young pilgrims, and said, My name signifies *that* prudence, which springs from grace and experience. My young pilgrims, I am well pleased with the fervour of your present zeal. I love the tree that requires pruning, rather than that which demands forcing. But the malicious and offended world will intentionally detract from your graces, and magnify your failings. And this will be a sore trouble to you. But be not disheartened, *offences must come*; and it will be your wisdom to examine whether they do not frequently rise from your own pride and indiscretion, even more than from the enmity of the world. Receive correction, from whatever quarter it comes, in this humble and docile spirit, and you will gain discretion. And discretion will teach you so to conduct yourselves that *your good will not, in the same degree, be evil*

spoken of. She will teach you to speak a word in season, and to withhold a word also in season; but remember, she hath no fellowship with the fear of man, or the love of carnal ease. And the end that you will thus attain, will be the enlargement of your influence in winning the prejudiced and perishing *from the power of Satan to the liberty of the sons of God.* This will be the finish to all your qualifications, when you shall learn by experience *to become all things to all men, in order to gain some.*

The benign Sisters, having thus severally warned the young pilgrims to make their calling and election sure by heavenly-mindedness and holiness, invoked the Father of Love to descend from heaven, and abide with them for ever.

Father of Love divine, inspire
Thy children with celestial fire;
Their innate selfishness disclose,
The fountain of terrestrial woes.

From Horeb's smoking summit dart
The mirror of the human heart;
The book of death wide open spread,
And flash conviction on the dead.

Or from dread Calvary's clouded height,
Fulminate celestial light;
Immanuel's stricken form reveal,
And teach them crimson guilt to feel.

Beneath the gulphs of Tartarus dread,
Where fiery torrents roll the dead;
In congenial scenes of hell,
Bid their selfish nature dwell.

Author of life! descend from high,
The seed of God-like life supply;
The seed of lowliness and love;
Hear, O hear, Celestial Dove!

So shall all thy sons unite,
Embodied by celestial might;
Judah with Israel hand in hand,
Like brethren in thy temple stand;

Love shall all dissention heal,
Each for others taught to feel,
And the mystic body move
In blissful harmony and love.

Come, halcyon days, by bards foretold,
Who spake the Spirit's mind of old.
Heaven to earth attracted bend,
And Sion from on high descend.

Above the earth, above the skies,
Thou sympathetic temple, rise;
In thee all fulness dwell sublime,
Beyond the bounds of space and time.



CHAP. VIII.



NOW I saw that, the next morning, the Sisters conducted the young pilgrims into the armoury, and clothed them from head to foot in spiritual armour, that they might be able *to stand against the wiles of the enemy*. The *girdle of truth* was girt next to their hearts, and upon that was fixed *the breast-plate of righteousness*. Their feet were shod with *the preparation of the Gospel of peace*. They received also *the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the two-edged sword of the Spirit*. There was, moreover, given unto them *the trumpet of prayer*, which hath power at all times to reach the ears of the Captain of the Lord's hosts, and procure reinforcements, whenever the enemy is too strong for the soldiers of the King.

These two young men being thus equipped for the battle, the Sisters once more addressed them, and said, *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do*. Powerful as the enemies are with whom

you have to contend, be assured that, one and all, they have already experienced an overthrow by the Prince of pilgrims. Venture boldly to face the enemies of the King, and your own eyes will behold the deadly blows which they received in combat with the Captain of your salvation. Their wounds can never be healed; blood perpetually flows from them, and they will eventually be mortal. O could you have seen the Prince of pilgrims, when he marched solitary and unsupported through all the country of your pilgrimage; how fearlessly he sought out all the monsters which infested these forests, and rendered them impassable; how he dealt his blows among them, and felled them roaring and bellowing to the earth. Could you but have seen the lighting down of his invincible arm at that hour, when he *spake in righteousness, mighty to save; when he trod the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with him; when his own arm brought salvation to him, and his fury it upheld him.* Behold, the Unconquerable is your Commander; and under his directions you will go forth yourselves, *conquering and to conquer.* As he himself won his kingdom at the point of the sword, so must all ye his servants cut your way through all opposition, and win the throne of glory, and the crown of life, by *resisting unto blood.*

Follow then your great General to victory; trace his footsteps by the blood which flowed

from his wounds, and which has even now virtue to inspire invincible courage into those who look upon it with tender recollection and confidence; as it has likewise power to paralyse the enemy who beholds it. And O! could you see the crown with which the noble army of martyrs stands glorified, in the presence of the King, your souls would kindle within you, and burn for martial deeds in this noble warfare; yea, you would count the loss of all things as an easy price to obtain a place in that solemn triumph, when all the harps and voices of heaven shall extol and magnify Him, who *leadeth captivity captive, and putteth all enemies under his feet*. The Unconquerable be with you!

The young pilgrims now proceeded, refreshed and rejoicing, on their journey. *Their mountain seemed to stand strong*; and they exulted in the brightness and perfection of their armour.

From the eminence on which they were now standing, appeared in the horizon the purple summits of the Delectable Mountains, rising in grandeur above the lower region of fogs and mists. There the pipe of the shepherd is heard not only by day, but during the hours of the tranquil and serene night. It is a region of calm delights, which the glorious inhabitants of the Heavenly Paradise themselves take pleasure to visit, and where, at times, they hold sweet communion with the fellow-heirs of immortality.

There it was that the heavenly choir, wafted upon a bright cloud, reflecting all the colours of the heavenly witness, struck the harps of God in the hearing of mortal men, and sung a new song of *Glory to God in the highest, and peace and good-will to man.*

Blessed be the Father of mercies, and the God of all consolations, who, from time to time, refreshes and supports the weary and fainting pilgrim with lively sensations of the reality of promised blessings, and with occasional foretastes of glory, which exceed the ordinary experience of the people of God as much as the latter exceeds the dead faith of the unregenerate. But let not the saints be *exalted above measure* by the abundant clearness of the vision.

The young pilgrims did not long travel upon this soft and velvet plain, nor long breathe the inspiring gales wafted from the Delectable Mountains. The ground presently began to decline, and they found themselves on the borders of a vast and gloomy forest, through which a steep path descended into the darksome Valley of Humiliation. An awe and horror overspread the minds of the pilgrims as they entered the solitary wilderness. The rustling of the groves, the croaking of the ravens, and the increasing gloominess of the overhanging cypress, contributed to excite fearful emotions in their minds. The sensation which they experienced was as though an invisible enemy were near unto them,

and meditating their destruction. Separated from the converse and abode of man, it was no small consolation to them at length to behold, at some distance, the appearance of a fellow-creature. When they had advanced a little further, Theophilus perceived that it was one of the companions of the Lady Pleasure. At this moment an arrow from an invisible power pierced the shield of Philadelphus, and wounded him severely. And now had he fallen at the feet of the subtle enemy, had not Theophilus supported him and borne him from the spot of danger.

Then did the two young pilgrims fall down upon their knees, and supplicate the protector of pilgrims to conduct them in safety through the perils of the wilderness; and each by turn read in his book the exploits of ancient pilgrims who *stopped the mouths of lions, having their strength made perfect in weakness*; and they hymned together *the sweet songs of Sion in this strange land*. But they had not advanced far, before they overtook one clothed in the habit of a pilgrim, who presently addressed them in the following manner.

My dear sons, I rejoice to see, that, at your early age, you have set so glorious an example in overcoming the seductions and vanities of the world. Assuredly you will be exalted to great glory in the presence of the King—you have already made a great progress, and merit the crown of glory; and I would have you take to

yourselves the comfort of your advancement. It can never be considered as pride, to think of yourselves according to your real state.

THEO. You do us great honour, Sir, by your high opinion of our attainments; and it gives us great pleasure to think, that a person of your experience judges so favourably of us.

THE STRANGER. I do not form my judgment upon conjecture only—I myself beheld with what dignified contempt one of you treated the allurements of Pleasure; and I exhort you earnestly to treat every worldling with equal contempt, asserting the dignity of your high calling, and your exaltation above the tribunal of men. Whom God hath justified, he will also infallibly glorify. The reason why I now address you, and afford you the consolation of my experience, is to assure you that, since you have overcome the seductions of this place, you have nothing further to apprehend; but may here rest yourselves and partake of the delicious fruits which these beautiful trees bear upon their branches. You may also release yourselves, for the present, from the incumbrance of your heavy armour, with which I perceive you are much fatigued. I will assist you in doing this; and it will be my delight to converse with you on your high privileges and attainments, and to relieve your minds from the burden of anxiety and doubt respecting your final attainment of glory.

The young pilgrims were charmed with the comfortable words of the stranger; and Theophilus, who was principally addressed, immediately proceeded to follow his advice, and began to take off some part of his armour. Now I saw that no sooner had he cast down his shield to the ground, than the stranger threw off his pilgrim's habit, and appeared in the form of the dreadful Apollyon. Theophilus and Philadelphus trembled, while Apollyon raised his powerful arm, and hurled a fiery dart at the breast of the former. The credulous youth received a severe wound, and fell to the ground, as though he had been absolutely dead, while the dreadful Apollyon, vomiting thick volumes of smoke and fire, rushed upon him, and trampled him under his feet. I now lost sight of the unhappy youth in the dark and sulphurous cloud which enveloped him; only I heard his sighs, and groans, and piercing shrieks. Poor Theophilus, where is now thy expected triumph! Thou art now laid low in the dust. *Thinking thyself to be something while thou art nothing*, thou art become as they, whose rock has fallen under them. Thou art cast out and trodden under foot of thy most cruel adversary. Farewell, Theophilus, I had hoped to see thee *do all things through him that alone could strengthen thee*; but now I see thee no more; Apollyon seizeth thee by the throat; he stranglenth thee; thy shrieks become faint and more faint; thy breath ceaseth for ever!

At this awful moment, while I was despairing for Theophilus, behold Philadelphus, recovering from his petrifying terror, blew the trumpet of prayer. Thrice did the loud trumpet make the wood to echo; and at the third blast, beyond all expectation, the King's champion, Great-grace, rushed towards the place from whence the sound proceeded, and in an instant, darting into the thickest volume of fire, closed with the dreadful Apollyon, and hurled him roaring to the ground. Then did I perceive the monster's deadly wound, which he had received from the Prince of pilgrims, bleeding dreadfully, and himself fainting through loss of blood.

The Captain of the Lord's hosts stretched forth his hand, and lifted up the apparently lifeless Theophilus from the earth, and inspired him as it were with new life.

After a short time he stood upon his feet, and humbly and thankfully ascribed his mighty deliverance to the invincible arm of his Almighty Saviour. The conqueror of Apollyon now addressed the young pilgrims in the following words. Young men, you have both met with defeat and disgrace in this Valley of Humiliation, and you have likewise found undeserved and unexpected help. Let the recollection of this abasement sink deeply into your heart, and learn at last, if you can receive this lesson, that *of yourselves you can do nothing*, while you may yet *do all things through Jesus Christ that strength-*

eneth you. To bring you to this state of humble and absolute self-renunciation, and dependance upon the Invincible, is the purport of this, and of every temptation and conflict which has and will befall you—Behold yon unbending oak; felled prostrate by the power of the tempest; and torn up by its roots; while the pliant and bending willow stoops to the earth, and rises again, unsubdued by the power of the air. I full well know the pride of your hearts, and your self-confidence, which, though subdued in one form, will revive in another; occasioning you many similar defeats and humiliations, before you enter the gates of glory. Alas! you will imagine, after each humiliation, that the inbred cancer of your nature is destroyed; but, be assured, it will only conceal itself for a time, and gathering fresh strength, and assuming a new form, surprise you with its unexpected attacks. Happy will you be, if, at last, you come forth from the fiery purgation, like gold tried seven times in the fire; and if by every humiliation you lose more and more of the dross of your inward corruption. The part of the physician is to discover the disease, and to help nature in her efforts to recover health. The Physician of souls in like manner makes manifest to you that pride, which is the malignant root of your spiritual corruption and misery; and be ye taught of him to be workers together with his grace in judging, condemning, and destroying

your natural self-dependance, that it may not be fearfully judged and trampled down of the Lord. Henceforwards, let not the noon-day heat nor the shadow of the evening come upon you, before you have confessed your insufficiency to the Lord, and humbly entreated him to bestow upon you that grace, which is all-sufficient and invincible.

Then did Great-grace bid the pilgrims follow him into the lowest depths of the Valley of Humiliation. So I saw them, humbled under a sense of their late disgrace, with eyes cast down to the ground, hand in hand, descending into a gloomy and frightful dell, which is called the Valley of Bacha, and the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The spirit of self-confidence had now received a wound; yet it struggled, not to fall alone, but drag to the earth with itself that other confidence, which is in the merits and strength of Him who is mighty to save. Thus, in pain, in terror, and I had almost said, despair, Theophilus and his companion descended through the deep and gloomy shades, expecting at every step to be precipitated into a bottomless gulph; while the bird of night shrieked and screamed on either side.

At length, fainting and exhausted, they beheld the light of day through the thick grove; and advancing, to their great astonishment and joy, found themselves in the sweet Dale of Consolation, which is the lowest recess of the

Valley of Humiliation. On either side this sweet retreat, the overhanging woods rise to a great height. The upper part of this little valley is closed with a white rock, consisting of petrified moss, from the summit of which a pure stream drops continually into a natural bason. Various flowers and fruits adorn the sides of the rivulet which flows from the bason, and the Tree of Life here flourishes, as in the Paradise of God.

Surprised and rejoiced, the young pilgrims enquired of their guide, how it could be, that so unexpected and delightful a refreshment should be found in the place, in which, of all others, they should have least expected to receive comfort. Go, said Great-grace, and trace the footsteps of your conquering Leader to yonder cross, and read the inscription. So they went to the cross, and read—

In weakness, strength receive; in mourning find
The untold solace of the contrite mind.

Then did Great-grace gently chide them, and said, Children, when will you understand that all things in the path of heavenly glory are by contraries? If you would *always thus rejoice*, be always thus *abased*.

Then did Great-grace conduct them through a winding cavern to the summit of the rock, where was a pleasant garden, and a neat white cottage, the habitation of one named Low-

ly-mind. The venerable guide of pilgrims gladly received them, and gave them to drink of the fountain of living water, which there bubbles up in a little mossy bason under the shade of a willow. So Theophilus and Philadelphus drank of the fountain, and partook of the pleasant fruits which the garden afforded. Then did the Shepherd take his harp and sing a sweet hymn, which deeply affected the young pilgrims.

There is a lowly way
Beneath the tempest's force;
Secure and blessed they,
Who hither hold their course.

When fainting pilgrims feel
Their chastisement severe,
Their bosoms pierc'd with steel
Find untold pleasure here.

That peace, the world can never know,
Sheds through their tears a sparkling ray;
As when the fair effulgent bow
Shines glistering on the showery day.

True mourners only thus are bless'd,
And find their Shepherd's promise sure
To all, who, by the world oppress'd,
In patient lowliness endure.

For who is He, who smiles above,
More faithful than the promis'd bow?
He who himself is only love,
As all *his children* soon will know.

Then hold sweet commune with your King,
The living fount your souls inspire,
The praises of Immanuel sing,
And let your hearts his Spirit fire.

The Prince of pilgrims loves to dwell
In every humble, contrite breast,
And often in this lowliest dell

A present Saviour stands confess'd.

CHAP. IX.

NOW it was the will of the King, that the young pilgrims should remain some little time in this sweet place, and receive some delightful impressions and foretastes of their heavenly rest, before they advanced on their journey. So they continued here awhile, passing their time in sweet meditation, in holy converse, and in communion with the Prince of peace. In the morning they frequently retired to the cool caverns in the rock, and meditated in the book of life, praying for light from above, and for a will to bring into subjection every thought to the oracles of Infallible Wisdom. Or they meditated upon some subject, which the shepherd Lowly-mind proposed to converse upon in the evening; at which time he was frequently visited by neighbouring shepherds. Then it was that all the faculties of their minds seemed to expand themselves, in order to take in *the one thing needful*; while all things past, present, and future, seemed to present themselves

in their due proportions, as beheld in the glass of faith. Sometimes, surveying the past, they looked back with astonishment and gratitude upon the loving-kindness prepared for them from all eternity; at another time, they reflected upon their own present unworthiness, high privileges, and transcendent hope. At another time, with the glass of faith, they pierced the vail of time, and apprehended *the very substance of things hoped for; things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive; but of which God revealeth a foretaste by his Spirit.*

And O how often, after such sweet converse, did they break out into astonishment, that any one should be so blind even to his own present interest and happiness, as to think the pains of pilgrims not compensated *in the life which now is—who being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also they have access by faith into this grace wherein they stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but they glory in tribulations also.*

In one of these sweet conversations, the shepherd thus addressed the two friends. My sons, tell me what passed in your minds, before Great-grace was sent to be your deliverer?

THEO. Why, we thought, at that moment, either that there was no salvation for any, or that at least it was not intended for us, but for

those for whom it was prepared. We had almost spoken like the men of this world, and *condemned the generation of the children of God.*

SHEP. But what think you now of your King?

THEO. *Our eyes have seen him and not another. He is love. He is indeed love; we have found him to be love, even unto us; and we can testify that whosoever cometh unto him, he will by no means cast out. We have called upon him in trouble, and we have received peace; we have called upon him in temptation and conflict, and we have received strength. Now we believe, not because of the testimony of another: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. We have now the witness in ourselves.*

But the minds of Theophilus and Philadelphus were not *constantly* in this happy frame. On the contrary, their late humiliation had the effect of impressing powerfully upon them *the plague of their own hearts*, and the necessity of self-examination. Yea, such was the impression left upon their minds that *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, and unsearchable*, that they were frequently rendered exceedingly uneasy respecting their real state and attainments before their heart-searching Judge. Labouring under these painful convictions, they at last resolved to unburden their

minds to the shepherd ; and accordingly Theophilus opened to him the thoughts of their hearts. Dear shepherd, we intreat you now to discourse with us on the subject of self-knowledge. For in proportion as we see more of the divine holiness, of the narrowness of the way of spiritual righteousness, and of the evil of our own hearts, we feel a revived and increasing anxiety respecting our own state and attainments. We begin to feel that we have not merely *come short of the glory* of the divine righteousness ; but that sin hath wrought in us *all manner of concupiscence*, and spiritual transgression of every statute of the law. We feel, it is true, at times drawn out of ourselves, as it were, towards the Lord our righteousness ; and then we have peace and sanctifying life. But we are no sooner *strong in the Lord*, than we would be *something as of ourselves* : hence we are presently cast down, finding that, *when we would do good, evil is present with us* ; and that when we would *rejoice in the hope of glory*, we are constrained to cry out, *Who shall shew us any good ?* Then we conclude ourselves to be hypocrites, self-deceivers, and not of the number of true pilgrims, who *rejoice in the Lord always*, and cannot sin, because *the divine seed abideth in them*.

My sons, replied the shepherd Experience, I am well pleased that you sink in self-estimation, in proportion as you become acquainted with the divine perfections, and with your own hearts.

Be assured, then, that all profession of religion, which is not followed by such effects as you describe, is nothing better than self-deception. The Author of life and holiness does not at once shew to his children the full extent of his law, nor the full depravity of their own hearts. Such a manifestation would at first discourage and overpower them. But as he sees they are able to receive convictions, he, with a fatherly love and gentleness, enlightens and chastises them. How beautifully does he signify this, when he proclaims, *Give ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak; and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain: my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass. Because I will publish the name of the Lord: ascribe ye greatness unto our God. He is the rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants; when he seeth that their power is gone. My sons, it is the Lord's uniform dealing with his children, to convince them by degrees of their own depravity and insufficiency, and to afford them strength and consolation in himself in the same measure as they feel their own power to be gone; his strength is made perfect in the extremity of our weakness.*

Guide of pilgrims, replied Theophilus, O di-

rect us to make our calling and election sure, and to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith, or not.

Young men, replied the shepherd, it is indeed *the one thing needful, to make our calling and election sure.* All things else in this life are more vile than dross, when compared with the possession of this happy assurance of an interest *in the exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.* Would you then possess this sovereign treasure and blessing, *give all diligence to add to faith every practical fruit of faith.* *If ye do these things, ye shall never fall:* but until you have attained to the practice and habit of every grace, you do well not to be sure of your calling and election. For many have been puffed up, and have perished by this presumption. *Would you cast out fear, you can cast it out only by perfect love.* We will now declare unto you, by what means you may understand whether these graces be in you of a truth, or not. For this purpose, that no man might deceive himself in the profession of godliness, a venerable shepherd, whom his Lord tenderly loved, left with us a record, in which all the characters of the children of God are declared. These are his words, *These things have I written unto you, that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life.* Mark, learn, and

inwardly digest the contents of this record of self-knowledge. The whole circle of the graces of spiritual life is therein set forth. Nature may produce fruits of one kind, according to the disposition of a man; but the grace of the Most High is distinguished by fruits of every kind. Many deceive themselves by partial reformation; but there is no sin which the child of grace alloweth. He buckleth on the armour of God on the right hand and on the left. Examining himself by this record, on the one hand, he is assured that *he hath not the love of God abiding in him, while he loveth not his brother; and, on the other, by this he knoweth that he loveth his brother when he loveth God.* In this record he is taught to distinguish between truly gracious affections, and those that are delusive, by this test; that the former always tend to, and are attended with the lamb-like, dove-like spirit and temper of Jesus Christ; that they naturally promote such a spirit of love, meekness, quietness, forgiveness, and mercy, as appeared in the Lord of Glory. For, if we study the nature of christianity, and the proper spirit of the gospel, by the word of God, we learn that this spirit is by way of eminence, the christian spirit. O examine yourselves well, *what spirit you are of; for by this shall you know that ye are his disciples, and that ye have eternal life.*

None shall the end, without these means, attain,
And none shall use them, saith the Lord, in vain.

The time at length arrived, when the pilgrims were to leave the sweet Valley of Consolation, and the converse of heavenly-minded shepherds, dead to pride and self-love, but alive to humility and love unlimited and unfeigned. The shepherd Lowly-mind accompanied them through the deep glens of a thick forest by the side of brooks and waterfalls. At length they ascended a lofty hill, from the summit of which they had a beautiful and astonishing view. Here they stood to gaze; and the shepherd enquired of Theophilus what were the objects which he observed?

THEO. I behold in the horizon purple mountains with a glory upon them.

SHEP. Those are the Delectable Mountains; but tell us, what objects do you view between yourselves and those mountains?

THEO. I see a plain expanded in the form of a circle, divided by many waters and hills; in which there stand numberless cities, towns, and villages: but I cannot see their form distinctly, because the plain is overspread with a thick mist or smoke.

SHEP. The plain which you now behold is the habitation of the men of this world. How little and indistinct do all its objects now appear to you, while you behold them from this eminence, which is called the Mount of Vision; and while, at the same time, you see *the everlasting hills* rising beyond in their just propor-

tion, and lost in the bright clouds, as far as the eye can reach. Would that you could always thus behold all things as they are; things *great* undiminished by distance, and things *little* not magnified by proximity; then would you in truth *walk by faith and not by sight*.

THEO. Is it possible that we can ever fix our affections upon that little, dark, and mean plain, which we now look down upon; and that we can ever again lose sight of the Mountains of Glory?

SHEP. *Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.* But what see you over the plain?

THEO. I behold frightful and portentous forms moving rapidly through the air, and blasting the whole atmosphere of the plain with their poisonous exhalations.

SHEP. You now behold *the prince of the power of the air*, and his angels; and their breath is as the smoke of a great furnace, and the sun and the air are darkened by reason of the smoke. And the inhabitants of the plain love that darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Unhappy men! How quickly, how unexpectedly will that hour come upon you, as a thief in the night, in the which you shall be made to confess that *all that is in the world, is not of the Father but is of the world, and the world passeth away and all that is in it!* Alas!

How many of you have professed to renounce the world, and yet make the opinions and fashions of men your only standard! Theophilus, what seest thou, above the polluted atmosphere of the city?

THEO. I see a sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven vials.

SHEP. These seven angels have the seven last plagues; for in them is completed and poured out, unmixed with mercy, the whole wrath of God. Blessed are they who join in the angelic hymn, the song of Moses and the Lamb—*Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteousness is made manifest.*

THEO. Will it be of any avail, if we go through every street of the city, and declare the righteousness of God to those perishing sinners? Will not they hear a man, if he warn them to repent and be saved, with tears and supplications?

SHEP. We saw the Prince of pilgrims himself stoop to wash their feet, and beseech the vilest malefactors among them to be reconciled to his Father. We saw him bleeding under a crown of thorns, and suffering infinite misery at their hands, that he might, if possible, (after they had exhausted their malice upon his person,) by condescension, by affection, by entreaty, gain them over to a sense of his ex-

cellence, and soften their enmity towards the King. But he prevailed not with the multitude to acknowledge, that the Lord only is holy, and to accept of the riches of his grace.

THEO. Then I perceive it will be in vain for us to attempt to convince such hardened sinners.

SHEP. Exhibit in your whole deportment humility and love, and let all those with whom you converse feel that you possess a treasure of inward peace, happiness, and righteousness, *which the world cannot give*. And if called to this service, *speaking as the oracles of God*, declaring the simple truth, pray to the King, and believe that you shall not pray in vain, that *his word may run and be glorified*; and that you yourselves may ascribe unto him unreservedly, *the kingdom, the power, and the glory*. Exalt the Saviour, and he will exalt you. To all the strivings of the people, reply, *Thus saith the Lord*. In this manner, some you may convince, and all shall you convict. *O let not your minds be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, by the cunning of serpents*. Remember that you are nothing as of yourselves, but that the Word of the King, unsophisticated by human corruptions, will be in your mouths *sharper than a two-edged sword*.

THEO. We thank you, good shepherd; pray for us, that we may ourselves be preserved from the dangers of this plain, and may be en-

abled to fight against the world as against the flesh and the devil.

SHEP. The world is indeed a subtle enemy, and you must pass through it; but be of good courage, *the Captain of your salvation hath overcome the world.* Mark well his footsteps, which are always set in the lowest place. The ground is painful, but it is good; and remember that, what this world was, it is,—what it is, it will ever be,—the inveterate rival of the world of glory. *There is no halting between God and mammon.* Time must be sacrificed to eternity, or eternity to time. Look well to yourselves, to your book, and to your prayers.

The shepherd Lowly-mind and the pilgrims now took leave of each other; and the young men began to descend from the Mountain of Vision to the Plain of Vanity. As they were walking along they spoke to one another with rapture of the Vale of Peace which they had lately visited; and wondered much, that the inhabitants of the plain could find any happiness in that thick concourse and constant care and dissipation, in which they lived. Many resolutions did they likewise make, that nothing should induce them to take up their abode there, and fix their affections upon vanity; and that neither the fear nor the friendship of its inhabitants should prevail with them to turn *to the right hand or to the left.* The Delectable Mountains still appeared glistening in purple

glory; and they, fixing their eyes upon the hope set before them, sung the blessedness of pilgrimage.

Happy the man, who bears in mind,
An earthly home was ne'er design'd;
Who on that city rests his eye,
Which God hath founded in the sky.

Terrestrial objects, fleeting near,
In true dimensions now appear,
Reduc'd by faith's unerring power,
The world a point, and time an hour.

No disappointment he shall know,
Who thus beholds all things below,
Holds them uncertain, fleet, and vain,
Above their pleasure and their pain.

Empower'd by faith, his lifted eyes
See Salem's lofty turrets rise,
Its length, its breadth, its depth, its height,
The nearest objects to his sight.

His gifted eye full view attains
Of dread Gehenna's endless pains:
Compar'd with this horrific sight,
He feels all mortal troubles light.

Their eye so fix'd, their end the same,
The fathers to old Canaan came;
The Pilgrim's staff so took in hand,
And journey'd to the promis'd land.

So, by the blood of Jesus bought,
They an abiding city sought;
A city brighter than the sun,
Of God's own building, thus they won.

So fix'd on heaven, the single eye
Shall ever brightening light descry,
While transient woes shall cease to pain,
And godliness contentment gain.

Conflicting pilgrim, so be bless'd,
Rise, and attain thy proffer'd rest;
With traveller's eye all objects view;
The light is happy as 'tis true.



CHAP. X.



NOW I saw that, having descended for several miles, they entered into the hazy and thick atmosphere of the plain, which is of so enchanting a nature, that it excites unaccountable fears and desires in the minds of those who breathe it, through the influence of the prince of the power of the air. They had no sooner arrived at this place, than they perceived a stranger coming to meet them. Now the true name of this person was Mr. Lukewarm, but he usually signed himself Mr. Judgment; and thus he addressed them.

MR. L. Young men, I perceive by your habit that you are pilgrims, and it gives me heartfelt pleasure to see so many persons, at the present time, travelling towards the Celestial City. I conjecture, that you are strangers to this stage of your journey, and unacquainted with the present sentiments of the inhabitants of the plain; I will therefore, with your permission, give you information and directions, where-

by you may avoid the giving of unnecessary offence, which otherwise you might probably do, without intending it.

THEO. You will very much oblige us by so doing; for we had conceived, and indeed have been assured by the friendly shepherds from whom we lately parted, that the inhabitants of this place still retain the same inveterate enmity to spiritual persons, which they displayed so decidedly in former times.

MR. L. Persons who live out of the world cannot be judges of its present state; and it too frequently happens, that they acquire by seclusion morose and austere sentiments concerning others. Let me assure you, that the inhabitants of this part of the plain have long since openly renounced the service of Beelzebub, and returned to their allegiance to the King of the Celestial City. Treat them therefore no longer as enemies, lest you become like a certain knight-errant, who mistook windmills for castles, and every horseman he met for an armed warrior and opponent. This will be the way indeed to bring yourself into inextricable trouble; for I assure you these persons have ability to injure you, if you imprudently insult them; and they have it likewise in their power to confer both riches and honours upon you. How thankful ought you to be, that so large a proportion of this people are your friends, and themselves candidates for the inheritance of the Celestial City.

THEO. You give us great pleasure to hear such good tidings. Your account of the place has removed the fears which we were beginning to entertain, lest we should be treated as Christian and Faithful of old. It is very pleasant to think that we may pass through this city with comfort and credit. We shall feel highly obliged to you to become our guide.

MR. L. For this purpose am I come out to meet you, being appointed by your King as a guide to pilgrims; and if you will follow my directions, you shall escape all those inconveniences and persecutions, which in bad times the pilgrims unavoidably incurred, and which they who have more zeal than knowledge now bring upon themselves. Do not take my word for it, but consult the book of your Prince; is it not there written, *Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?*

They now arrived at the gate of the city, where stood the centinels, Fear-of-man, and Love-the-world; at the sight of whom Theophilus and Philadelphus were much agitated: but Mr. Lukewarm called aloud to them, Here are none but friends to your King and your country; so they let them pass unmolested. Now they had no sooner entered the city than Mr. Lukewarm pointed out to them the edifices erected in honour of their King, great and splendend buildings; and assured them that all the inhabitants of that part of the city, through

which they should pass, served only the Celestial King. Then did they presently come into the market-place of the great city, where they beheld every kind of vanity exposed to sale; riches, honours, sumptuous houses, furniture, musical-instruments, light and vain songs, cards, dice, garments of purple and embroidery: moreover, in the midst of the market-place an image of the idol *Fashion* was set up. But what was their astonishment, when they beheld Mr. Lukewarm offer incense to the idol, and direct them to follow his example! Theophilus was preparing to consult his book, when Mr. Lukewarm thrust it back into his pocket, and whispered him, Good young man, this is not the time and place to profit these persons; I love you for your honest zeal, but you must not cast pearls before swine. If you wish in the end to benefit them, join in their innocent pleasures, and you will soon have a favourable opportunity to moderate that which is only evil in the excess. It is not the use, but the abuse of these things which is really culpable. Mr. Lukewarm had scarcely uttered these words, when who should come up to him, but Sir Worldly-conformity himself, the master of the ceremonies? This gentleman, having taken him aside for a short time, returned, and taking Philadelphus by the hand, I am rejoiced, my dear child, he said, once more to see you. You are near of kin to me; and I intend shortly to make my will, and set you up in the world. Come di-

rectly with me to my house, and all that I have is yours. O how I rejoice to recover my long lost child ! and with that, clasping him in his arms, he hurried him into a splendèd coach, and drove off; leaving poor Theophilus alone with Mr. Lukewarm. Theophilus was so overpowered and agitated by the loss of his companion, that, ignorant what he was doing or thinking, and in the fondness of delusion to do his King service, he offered incense to the idol Fashion. Mr. Lukewarm applauded, and assured him that he was now in the way to obviate all prejudices against his profession, and to become a most useful servant to the King; to which he added, Only wait for an opportunity of gradually conciliating to the King, those who abuse these his excellent gifts.

Then I saw, in my dream, that all the worshippers of Fashion formed themselves together in a long procession, and proceeded to another part of the city, where was held a fair of spiritual merchandise. In the midst of the square was erected an image of the idol Natural Liberty. And an herald proclaimed, *Be ready at what time ye hear the sound of the cornet, lute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, to fall down and worship the image of Natural Liberty: but if ye worship not, ye shall be condemned as enemies to Common-sense, Reason, Morality, and the commandments of the Celestial King, our rightful Lord and Sove-*

reign; your name shall be cast out as vile, and you shall be shunned as deceivers of the people. Now I saw the multitude approach the idol, and each pluck a branch from a large and ancient tree which stood over it, which was called the Tree of Liberty. They did also eat of the fruit of the tree—but no sooner had they tasted it, than the eyes of some were blinded; of others, the hands or feet became paralytic; and a strange vertigo and intoxication seized their heads: in-somuch that becoming light-headed, they fancied themselves possessed with new powers in those members, of the use of which they had been deprived. It was a strange sight to behold the blind exclaiming, *We see*; the lame, *We walk*; the deaf, *We hear*; and all of them looking round with contempt upon those who still retained the use of their limbs and faculties. Theophilus approached the image, hurried on by the throng, and I beheld Mr. Lukewarm pluck a branch from the tree, which had on it an apple inscribed, *Natural liberty the foundation of moral distinctions, and of rewards and punishments*. And now had poor Theophilus been tempted to eat of this forbidden fruit, but that, to my inexpressible joy, I beheld one forcing his way through the crowd, who, with an angry look, drew him back from the place where he stood, and cried aloud, What doest thou here, Theophilus? To which question Theophilus knew not what to answer; where-

fore at present he stood speechless before him. Then spake the venerable man, Art not thou the young man that I directed to escape for thy life?

THEO. Yes, dear Sir, I am the man.

EVANGELIST. How is it then that thou art so quickly turned aside from the King's highway?

THEO. I met with this gentleman, Mr. Judgment, who directed me this way through the City of Vanity.

EVAN. He is a blind leader of the blind, a carnal counsellor. It is well for thee, that thou hast not eaten of that fruit: else mightest thou have been for ever enchanted in the folds of that deadly serpent which is the genius of that tree; and so never have felt thy chains, nor have sought delivery from them, till thou hadst awaked fast bound in misery and iron, *where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched.*

Theophilus knew the voice of the true shepherd, and once more, with exceeding joy, placed himself under his guidance. In the mean time, the worshippers of Natural Liberty gathered round the prophet with extreme indignation, shouting aloud, Great is Natural Liberty, the genius of the Laodiceans, the mother of Virtue and Morality. In vain did Evangelist beckon to them to hear him speak: with one accord they shouted, No liberty, No virtue, No liberty in

man, No justice in God. Then did they proceed to cast dirt and filth upon the prophet: but he nevertheless stood his ground, and beckoned that he would speak, until the baser sort among them, stopping their ears, departed to their own place; bearing in triumph the boughs which they had plucked from the Tree of Liberty, and shouting again and again, Liberty, Reason, Common-sense, for ever! Away with mystics and enthusiasts!

Now when the mass of the people had departed, the remainder, excited by curiosity, proposed to hear what Evangelist would say; and he addressed them to the following effect. Men and brethren, in the beginning, when your Sovereign Lord the King allotted to you this your habitation, he set your first parents in a beautiful garden, abounding with every innocent delight and pleasure, the image of his love towards you, and of your primitive innocence. Therein he planted the Tree of Life, and bade them eat thereof, and live. O, had they had faith in the Father of all mercies, and sought the end of their existence where he taught them to seek it, they would then have attained to the life of God in the soul of man; even that spiritual life, which quickeneth the whole course of sanctified nature in divine holiness, harmony, and bliss. They would indeed have lived, *yet not they, but God would have lived in them.* Had they had faith in the Eternal Wisdom and

Goodness, and firmly believed, that He who formed them and blessed them, knew best their nature and its sovereign good, they should never have known evil, nor pain; but should for ever have had *that eternal life which was with the Father, and was manifested in the Son*. Alas! they had not faith in their Father and best friend! They were tempted by him, whom you ignorantly worship, to prefer the fruits of this Tree of Liberty, and to make experiment for themselves of good and evil. They perceived not, that, losing faith and the Tree of Life, they had lost all liberty and power to rise to goodness and happiness, retaining only liberty to fall from sin to sin, from misery to hell. Thorns and thistles became now the natural produce of earth. O, how many devices have you, their children, tried, in order to discover the sovereign good and end of your existence! and O, how vain have been all your attempts! The more you *promise yourselves liberty*, the more you prove yourselves to be *the slaves of corruption*, and the further departed from original righteousness and happiness. O that you may at length learn, when you have exhausted all the experiments of carnal wisdom, and drunk the cup of bitterness to the dregs, that He, who formed you from the dust, and ordained the end of your existence, knew best to direct you to the attainment of your sovereign good. May the anguish of your hearts bring you at last to

a feeling that *it is not of him that willeth, or of him that runneth, but of God.* For behold, *I bring you glad tidings of great joy; He, who in the beginning removed from you the Tree of Life, hath once more planted it in your soil, with the pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb; and on either side of the river is there the Tree of Life, which beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruits every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse and condemnation to you; if, renouncing this Tree of Natural Liberty, you will now repent, and believe in Him, without whom you can neither see, nor hear, nor understand, nor seek the life of true liberty. But, if the Son make you free, then shall you be free indeed.*

While Evangelist spake these words, and called upon the God of truth to seal the word of truth, I saw the scales fall from the eyes of some who were blind, the feet of some who were lame revive, and the withered hands recover life. Then I beheld a small remnant of his hearers humbly entreat Evangelist to lead them to the Tree of Life. Hereupon *I heard a voice from heaven, as it had been the voice of mighty thunder, speaking, I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And the Spirit and*

the Bride say, Come. And let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely. At this instant, a bright star appeared in the East, and Evangelist, taking Theophilus by the hand, invited all who were present to follow him to the Tree of Life, and *to take of the water of life freely.* So the company of believers followed him; and he led them to where the star appeared. Then did they pass through several retired streets in the city, where sojourned, in *white* but *humble* habitations, without parade or ostentation, the faithful servants of the King. Before their houses were fair and fruitful trees, overshadowing a little stream, clear as crystal; by the side of which they ascended a mountain which stood in the midst of the city. On this mountain stood a venerable edifice, dedicated to the King of the Celestial City; and hard by flourished that beautiful and glorious tree, the Tree of the Life of God in the soul of man, the Tree of the Fullness of Grace, the Tree of Evangelical Liberty. Under the shade of this delightful tree, by the side of the Water of Life, was there a throne, and he that sat upon it was called the Defender of the Faith. He was a venerable old man, now sinking under the weight of years and infirmities. A cloud rested upon his dim eyes, which were lifted up in humble resignation to the throne of glory. His countenance was deeply furrowed with sorrow; yet, ever and

anon, he would stretch out his arms over the city, and cry out, *I stand for the defence of the Gospel. My little children, love one another.* In his hand he held a candlestick with a light that seemed about to expire, which, with all his remaining powers he grasped, and preserved from falling. On the right, he was supported by a counsellor who held the book of life in his hand, lifting it up in the sight of all kindreds, tongues, nations, and peoples. On his left hand, another counsellor was testifying christian principles the only basis of christian virtues; *deliverance to the captives, and liberty to them that are bruised.*

Then spake Evangelist to them that accompanied him, *Except the Lord of Sabbaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrah.* Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, that the hands of our Moses are not yet fallen to the ground, but his enemies still tremble at the uplifting of yonder banner of the cross—that one still sitteth upon our throne, *who loveth thy law, and meditateth therein day and night. Thou through thy commandments hast made him wiser than his enemies; he hath more understanding than all his teachers: for thy testimonies are his study.* All ye who love liberty, draw near and behold the Tree of Life, and the waters of the River of Free-grace; and judge now between the children of Natural Liberty, and the children of Grace. Bless the

Lord God of heaven, who still upholdeth in the hand of his servant, the burning and shining light; and, *while you have the light, walk as children of the light; lest your candlestick be speedily removed out of its place.* Behold, saith your Judge, *I come quickly, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.*

Having spoken these words, he led them to the fountain of the water of life, the river of pure grace, which proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and bade them drink of it freely, and thirst no more. This stream, said he, floweth from the side of him who was pierced with a spear; and he who hath well drunk of it, will know the full meaning of those words, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.* Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Then I heard a voice from the sanctuary of the house of God, which stood hard by; *Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I*

will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

At the sound of this awful voice, the congregation trembled; but the prophet once more admonished them—Men and brethren, I marvel not that ye tremble at this voice. It is the last warning to the church of the Gentiles: *Ephesus* is no more, *Smyrna* is no more, *Pergamos* is no more, *Thyatira* is no more, *Sardis* is no more, *Philadelphia* is no more—*Laodicea*, your candlestick alone remaineth! *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear.* That which I delared unto you, how that you are very far fallen from the simplicity of the gospel, the thunder of the Lord God hath in this mighty voice manifestly pronounced. If you can receive it, the gold which he counselleth you to buy of Him, is that foundation of gold, the Lord Jesus Christ, which you have hitherto rejected; and in its place, have substituted the doctrine of Natural Liberty. The white raiment which he offereth freely unto you, is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He is willing to take your rags in exchange for the garment of immaculate righteousness and immortality. The eye-salve which he is willing to bestow upon you, is that light and unction of the Holy Ghost, which no man can receive, who sayeth within himself, *I see.* Brethren, if you will not now repent, and ascribe the kingdom, the power, and the glory, unfeignedly and unreservedly, to the

Sovereign Lord of grace and glory, he hath said, and he will make it good, *Behold, your house is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me until the time, when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.*

Then did the prophet conduct his followers to the Tree of Life, and interpreted unto them the mysterious inscription which was engraved upon it—*As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.* The Tree of Life is He, *whose body is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed.* So they all drank of the pure stream, and did eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life; after which, the prophet gave them his blessing.

Bless'd is the man, whom devilish pride
 Shall never turn from grace aside;
 Who with a single eye believes,
 And every good by faith receives;
 At once attains eternal rest,
 Of truth, and good, and bliss, possess'd.
 Unmov'd by pride, he keeps his place,
 And sees the dues of all his race;
 As for himself, for others feels,
 And equal love impartial deals.
 To God his grand relation knows,
 For boundless love, love boundless shews,
 His sovereign good, in love, attains,
 And blessing, still new blessing gains.
 But sons of Liberty shall never know,
 From grace alone what blessings flow;
 The truth, the good, the bliss, possess'd
 By those who in God's wisdom rest.

Now I saw, in my dream, that the inhabitants of the City of Vanity, who had hearkened to the exhortation of Evangelist, departed, no longer to make vows and resolutions in their own strength, but to search the Book of Life, to know the will of their King, and to pray incessantly for grace to understand it rightly, and to perform it faithfully. Blessed be that sunshine of grace which had extinguished the candle of self-sufficiency, in order to shed upon them that walked in darkness the light which shall not be taken from them.

Now when Theophilus was left alone with Evangelist, his faithful guide reproved him once more for having quitted the King's high-road, and set before him the extreme danger in which he had stood. Then taking him again by the hand, he bade him beware *not to look again upon Vanity*. My son, said he, I feel pity for your late error. It is indeed hard for the most experienced pilgrims to hold their cup even, in this dangerous place. It is hard to know the wickedness of the world; it is still harder to disengage ourselves from its entanglements; and it is still more difficult after that, not to run into a contrary extreme. But *all things are possible* to the man of God, who looketh up with a single eye to the Author and Finisher of his faith.

THEO. When I quitted the King's high-road, according to the suggestion of Mr. Luke-warm, (for this, I now understand, to be his true

name,) I hoped to influence this people for their good.

EVAN. Dear child, thou art but one against a thousand; a youth against veterans; one of no estimation against men of authority and weight; drawn thyself at present to the world in an infinite degree beyond what thou now suspectest;—they will influence *thee*, thou wilt not influence *them*. I perceive that thou hast been led away through ignorance of the world, and of thyself.

THEO. I acknowledge my fault, and cry aloud for mercy.

EVAN. Peace be unto thee, in the name of the Prince of peace. Hereafter, when thou art confirmed in gracious habits, and hast established a respect to thy own stability, thou mayest hope to have an influence among men. Our great Master could associate indiscriminately with men, and command attention and reverence; because he could not be tempted to sin. But he that was greatest among the children of flesh and blood, kept himself *holy and undefiled*, because he kept himself *separate from sinners*; and not only prayed *not to be led into temptation*, but himself shunned it also; *so was wisdom justified of both her children. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.* Alas! how many, even of the servants of the

King, are now entangled with the snares of the world! Elegant and learned company, sumptuous apparel and furniture, splendid mansions and amusements, ensnare them; while they forget the commandment, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.*

THEO. I now recollect, that I promised to renounce the world when I was devoted to his service; but till the present moment I did not understand fully the extent and difficulty of this obligation.

EVAN. I am not sure that thou yet understandest the extent of the world of iniquity; for who can fully comprehend *the course of this world*, how it is managed by *the prince of the power of the air*! I would have thee at present hold sweet communion with thy God in retirement, and pray for wisdom from above to convince thee of the corruption that is in the world, through lust. Possessed of that peace, which the world cannot give, nor take away, thou wilt become independant of the smiles and frowns of mortals, and be rendered able to pass unmoved *through good report and evil report*. But woe be unto thee, if, mistrusting the Comforter and Shepherd of Israel, thou lookest to the world for consolation and provision. Thou shalt

then soon find thyself *fallen into a snare, and pierced through with many sorrows*; yea, entangled in such a net of misery, slavery, and temptation, that thou shalt wish thou hadst never been born. O learn to love retirement and solitude, the secret walk with God, and communion with *the God of all consolation*; so shalt thou be complete in the full provision for this life, as well as for that which is to come, sealed and secured to thee in the covenant of grace. Hast thou not a covenant which secures to thee all that thou canst desire? What wouldst thou have more, that thou shouldst render thyself dependant upon the creature? Blessed is he who understandeth the security and fulness of the everlasting covenant, and rests in the superabundance of blessedness. He is so much above this world, that the hopes and fears which are the anxiety of other persons, excite in him but a smile. His comforts are out of the reach of the creature. By dependance upon the Creator, he becomes independant of the creature. He takes the lowest station in the sight of men; but, before God, he sees the world at his feet: he studies it; he weighs it; he spurns the mammon of unrighteousness. It is with his conversation as with the rays of the solar orb. Though we enjoy his conversation and light here below, nevertheless his soul is in heaven: his mind is like the state of the world above the moon, ever serene. Instead of cumbering his thoughts

about many things, he takes up his rest in the faithfulness of his God. It is not for flesh and blood to attain this elevation, but through Him who hath pronounced, *Without me ye can do nothing*. This perfection is nothing less than union with God our Saviour; and the progress thereunto is from utter darkness to infinite light. Every corruption, every lust, every vanity, retards this progress; for to a heart divided between heaven and earth, He who is unity and undivided love can never be united: My son, give unto Him thy whole heart.

Thus did Evangelist and Theophilus converse as they passed through the city, till at length they arrived at a poor and wretched part of the town, where was a cross set up with an inscription, *Jesus of Nazareth*; and hard by the cross, a stable, in which a small cradle was set. While Theophilus stood considering the memorial before him, My son, said Evangelist, hast thou not been assured that *the first shall be last, and the last first*? When the Son of the Most High descended from his throne, as he set his foot upon the earth, he inverted as in a moment the whole course of this world. He took the lowest place; and the lowest place, by his presence, was exalted above all places. From that moment, *all that is esteemed in the world*, sunk into baseness; *and all that is despised in the world*, rose into glory. Insomuch that he, who would now be great among the children of men, must

become the servant of all; or inevitably be trodden under foot, as the mire of the street, in the day of the exaltation of the lowly and meek. He hath said, and he will make good his word, *Whoso exalteth himself shall be abased. I will wipe Jerusalem, as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down.* O thou, the King of Glory, Lord of heaven and earth, didst thou choose the manger in thy nativity, the work of a carpenter for thy occupation, the open air for thy chamber, and the turf for thy pillow? Didst thou minister unto thy creatures as a servant, and stoop to wash the feet of transgressors? Wast thou spit upon, insulted, and crucified with malefactors; and do the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, and the fashion of this world, still obtain regard and estimation with those who name the name of Jesus? Verily, the hour is at hand, when thou wilt trample down the mountains, and exalt the valleys, and bring to nought the swellings of pride. The rich man shall cast away his superfluities, and the ostentatious man his vanities; and the kingdom of charity, and the communion of fellow-feeling, and brotherly-love, shall reign triumphant upon earth. *Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.—Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*

Thus conversing together, they passed

through the city, until they arrived at the house of Gaius, the host of Pilgrims, who dwelt at a small distance from the city. To his house Evangelist conducted Theophilus, that he might receive refreshment and lodging for the night. But before Theophilus parted with Evangelist, he entreated him to search for his dear brother Philadelphus, and related to him the manner in which they had been separated. Then did Evangelist give him his blessing, and bade him beware of spiritual pride, and ever bear in mind, now that he had so far *escaped the corruption which is in the world, that he himself also had sometime been foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, and that grace alone had made the difference between him and them that perish.*

Now I saw, in my dream, that, scarcely had Evangelist brought forth the young man from the City of Vanity, and conducted him to the habitation of the friend of pilgrims, than behold, suddenly the heavens became black and lowering, and red fiery clouds, piled one upon another, and swelling with a fluctuating and agitated surface, were rolled rapidly forwards by the four winds of heaven, and met directly over the city. Theophilus blessed the heavenly King for his safety, and trembled as he beheld the conflicting elements; and still more, when he heard portentous voices in the air, and loud thundrings, and saw the incessant flashes of fire, and

thunderbolts discharged from the clouds. At the same time the earth was shaken, as it seemed, to its foundations; and great and destructive hail was dashed upon the earth.

My son, said Gaius, if this sight terrify thee, let it also remind thee, how that the whole world shall thus pass away, and he that doeth the will thereof. The righteous Lord shall pour down upon the men of this world, snares, fire and brimstone, storm and tempest; this shall be their portion to drink. For lo, the Lord cometh out of his place, to visit the wickedness of such as dwell upon the earth! But who may abide the day of his coming? Who shall be able to endure when he appeareth? His fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the barn; but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.

O Theophilus, I pray that thou mayest be preserved from the mountain of condemnation, which burneth with fire, and is covered with blackness, and darkness, and tempest; and that, by a simple reliance upon the righteousness of God, thou mayest come unto Mount Sion, the City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem; and receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, mayest have grace, whereby to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire. O Theophilus, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming

of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat.

Thus did Gaius discourse with Theophilus, before he retired to rest; while the loud thunderings and tempest ceased not during the whole night. Theophilus rejoiced in his present safety, but *rejoiced with trembling*, and sighed when he called to mind the danger of his dear friend and companion.



CHAP. XI.



THE morning at length arrived; but before Theophilus proceeded on his journey, his friendly host would conduct him to a spot of ground, where he might witness the manner in which pilgrims were beguiled, circumvented, and spoiled by the ruler of this world. So he shewed him a pilgrim, who had *fallen into the temptation and the snare, and had erred from the faith.*

Now, as the unhappy man was fallen asleep in carnal security, behold, the unseen disposers of the course of this world drew near, and began to weave the snare of worldly connections and fascinations. They riveted him to the earth with sundry subtle and interwoven threads, which his eye did not discern. In the mean time they fanned him with the fan of prosperity, lest he should awake, and call upon the Breaker of spells—Having completely entangled the poor man, they left him; and I saw that he presently awaked, and attempted to rise and

proceed on his journey. But now he was not able to stir one of his limbs, nor yet to discover the subtle chain by which he was confined to the earth. So, after a few vain and ineffectual struggles, he fell asleep once more.

Then said Gaius to Theophilus, These are the snares, my son, from which the Redeemer has extricated thee, if so be that thou look not back, and become a pillar of salt. This man is Demas, once a pilgrim fair for the Celestial City, but now, *one who hath a name that he liveth but is dead.* So perish all they, *that would be rich, that would be amused, that would be esteemed among men, that would shun the Cross of the Lord Jesus.* Blessed is he who trusteth altogether to the Covenant of his God for all needful things. *For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.* But thou, O man of God, *flee these things: and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.*

Now I saw that, after a short time, the miserable man was seized by the extreme torments of death. The poisonous web in which he was entangled had penetrated like a cancer to his vitals, and his whole body was turned black to the sight, and offensive to the smell; and he presently expired in inexpressible agonies.

Then said Gaius, My son, the wisdom of youth is to use the experience of age. Learn

thou from the experience of the aged, that *evil communications infallibly corrupt good manners*. In like manner, that lukewarm society destroys zeal, and mixed society teaches to confound good and evil. Such as is thy friend, such wilt thou thyself be. Remember Demas.

Theophilus having thanked the friendly Gaius, and promised to treasure up his counsel, proceeded on his journey, and travelled till towards evening he ascended the hill which was in his way to the Celestial City, from which he once more beheld the Delectable Mountains before him. Here he paused for a short time to rest himself, and recollect with penitential sorrow his late transgression, in following the guidance and counsel of Mr. Lukewarm, by which he had lost his beloved Philadelphus. Then fixing his eyes, for the last time, upon the plain through which he had journeyed, he thus expressed the emotions of his heart—

When sets the glimmering orb of day,
How sweet our progress to survey,
To see that nearer now we stand
To the glorious heavenly land.

Distinct, and more distinct, and clear,
Canaan's purple hills appear,
And Sion's everlasting light
More conspicuous meets the sight;

Sweeter than the fading view,
To which I bid the last adieu,
And leave the darkling world behind,
While nobler prospects fill my mind.

Rapt no more on memory's wing,
Scenes of ancient days I sing,
Like music dying on the ear,
Like the last words of parents dear.

Farewell, sweet thoughts of distant days,
When twilight shed her pallid rays;
No more yon hazy views delight,
Far fairer scenes appear in sight.

Memory reluctant turns her eyes
From where the mausoleums rise,
Where Theban grandeur lives in song,
And ancient wisdom flourish'd long.

Memory my soul would still invite,
To keep the Argo yet in sight,
See Jason steer his silent way,
And all the hosts of heaven survey.

Or rapt to Ida's towering height,
Place the Ilian domes in sight,
See fam'd Pelides hurl his spear,
And Priam's praise of Helen hear.

Or place me in the solemn grove,
By Wisdom's sons beguil'd to rove,
Or rapt to Druid's midnight haunt,
Of high, divine communion vaunt.

Or glens which Roman sages chose,
Where the Apennines arose,
And held high converse, far retir'd,
By sons of science yet admir'd.

To scenes like these vain memory calls,
Away from Salem's glistening walls,
Faith spreads a fairer, brighter view,
To earthly scenes I bid adieu.

Distinct, and more distinct, and clear,
Canaan's purple hills appear,
And Sion's everlasting light
Bursts all glorious on my sight.

Now I saw, in my dream, that Theophilus pursued his journey till he came to the River of God, the River of the Water of Life; where he quenched his thirst, and ate of the delightful fruits which grew upon its banks. Here his sorrows were soothed, and melted, and a sweet peace suffused over his mind. It was, indeed, a delicious valley, secluded by beautiful little hills, which rose on either side of the stream, along which his path lay. These hills were covered with shady groves, among which appeared the white cottages of shepherds, with sweet lawns before them, and sheep feeding upon the tender grass. Between the little hills descended rivulets with delightful waterfalls, overshadowed with ancient trees. At the foot of these little hills were spread fertile meadows, and the clear waters of the river were adorned with rushes, and white swans taking their pastime among the reeds. All care and sorrow were hushed in this beautiful retreat of calmness and peace; and it seemed, as it were, an earnest to Theophilus of the heavenly rest. Now as he was enjoying this serenity, and contrasting the delights of retirement and divine communion, with the noisy, empty, and unprofitable

scenes which he had so lately quitted, and reflecting how human converse degenerates amidst wordly dissipation, and is invariably, in all its scenes, exercised in trifles and vanities; he was overtaken by one in the garb of a pilgrim, who thus addressed him. Young man, I am truly rejoiced to meet with a person of your age, favoured with so extraordinary a measure of grace, as to forsake the City of Abominations, and encounter the hardships of pilgrimage.

I am glad, replied Theophilus, that my way meets with your approbation, and I assure you that I do not regret my removal from scenes of Vanity. For what is there in the haunts of dissipation to be compared with the calm delight which this sequestered vale inspires?

Nothing indeed, replied the stranger; bitter experience has convinced me, that the inhabitants of the plain, one and all, are equally objects of contempt. Indeed you are singularly happy in having escaped the contraction of worldly and sensual habits, by an early departure from the place. It is too true that they, who at my time of life become pilgrims, have all up-hill work during their pilgrimage. But your way will be smooth, your sky will be bright, and your course will be without labour. Your difficulties are all now at an end, and you need no longer doubt nor fear, lest you come short of the prize of the high calling which is before you.

Scarcely had the stranger spoken these

words, than they arrived at the spot where the way parts. A rough and steep track lay before them; but on the left there was a smooth and inviting path, following the course of the river. Theophilus enquired of his companion, which road he should take. I am glad, replied the stranger, that I happened to overtake you before you arrived at this place; as I am well acquainted with the road. Your path still follows the course of this delightful river. Follow the track, in which I now place you, and you will speedily arrive at the dwelling-place of one Full-assurance, who will both make you welcome, and give you a passport which will free you from all molestation and trouble in your way to the Celestial City, and moreover insure your admittance there. Farewell; thou highly privileged child of God.

Now I saw that Theophilus quitted the King's high-road, and passed over the stile, exulting in the expectation of speedily reaching the dwelling-place of Full-assurance. But presently the sun, which had shed its last purple rays upon the beautiful vale, sunk behind the rising forests, and a thick mist overspread the path of Theophilus. So he hastened his pace, that he might gain the expected mansion as speedily as possible. But I beheld, that, every moment, the sky became more black and lowering, and the fogs more thick and gloomy. On a sudden, a horror seized the mind of Theophilus,

a horror of deep solitude, and of wandering in an unknown region, and of perils from the powers of darkness. Yet did he proceed, penetrating still further the thick mist of gloom, which the light of heaven never dissipates, nor enlightens. But vain were his looks for the cheerful light of the habitation of friends. No light, near or distant, was to be seen; nor was any sound to be heard, but that of the sudden blast which swept along the valley, and shook the leafless elm and ash, while the bird of solitude uttered its doleful shrieks. Yet still did he proceed over the waste, hour after hour, expecting the dawn of the morning light. But no ray from the heaven above ever penetrated this horrible gloom. *No power of the fire could give him light, neither could the bright flame of the stars endure to light that horrible night, which is an image of that darkness which shall afterward receive them who in this present life forsake the light.*

Thus did he advance, drawn on, as it were, by an invisible power, feeling the sensations of an exile from the Eternal Providence, and agonized with horror, till, having descended by a steep path, he heard a massy portal close tremendously behind him; and he found himself in a deep dungeon, which was hewn in the side of a mountain. It was in vain that he sought again the entrance of the cavern; and it was to no purpose that he cried aloud for assistance: his cries were answered only by deep groans from

the extremity of the pit. Overcome at length with terror and despondency, he cast himself upon the ground; and there remained in a dreadful agony, till, after a long time, the massy portal once more moved on its hinges, and a gigantic figure approached, holding an expiring taper, and bending over him. Theophilus fainted at the terrible sight; but when he recovered his senses, he saw the fiend still stooping down and surveying him, and heard him utter the following terrific words; Here, wretch, shalt thou remain, *fast bound in misery and iron*; inasmuch as thou hast now sinned past redemption. In the pride of thy heart thou hast forsaken the King's high-road, and thou art delivered over to my charge, *to the certain fearful looking for of fiery indignation, which shall devour the ungodly*. Thou hast now made it manifest, that *thy name is not written in the Book of Life*. If thou wilt be advised by me, the more speedily thou makest an end of thyself, the better it will be for thee. Hast thou not heard the groans of thy companions, who lie in this pit, *without God and without hope*? Happy would they be, were they to lay hands upon themselves, and place themselves out of their present misery. But if thou wilt not be persuaded to adopt this wise measure, dream not that there is any redemption and glory for reprobates like thyself: for thou hast not *the faith of God's elect*; nor dost thou certainly know that there is any truth in the

report, that there is a Celestial City beyond the river. Few indeed give credit to the tale, no man alive has beheld the place; and how contradictory are the opinions of those, who pretend to give an account of it, and of the way to it! Nay is it not confessed, that the most wise, learned, and best informed, doubt, if they do not absolutely disbelieve the existence of a Celestial City, and cannot in the exercise of all their powers discover the way to it? Yea, they become every day more and more convinced, that all that is said about the way, is full of contradictions and absurdities. Surely thou hadst done better, and it is not now too late to be wise, if thou hadst not sacrificed things certain to uncertainties, yea, to expectations which it is certain *thou* shalt never realize; however it may be with those, whom thou regardest as appointed to eternal life. And now, to convince thee that I am a friend, and not an enemy, I promise forthwith, if thou wilt henceforwards walk by sight and not by vision, to give thee a cup of pleasure, which shall drown all thy troubles, as an earnest of greater things which I will do for thee. For I purpose to bestow upon thee my daughter Intemperance herself, who will soon laugh thee out of thy melancholy humours; yea, and I will advance thee to great honour among my friends, as soon as they are thoroughly convinced that thou hast recovered the use of thy reason and sound judgment.

The fiend, having thus counselled Theophilus, left with him a portion of the bread and water of affliction; and told him that he should return by and by, to know his determination. So he departed, and light departed with him; and Theophilus was left to the company of frogs and bats which inhabited the cavern, and to hear the groans of the dying.

In an agony of despair he cast himself upon the ground, and uttered the most melancholy moans. At length he vented his sorrows in the following bitter exclamations; Woe is me, woe is me! I am lost, for ever lost! I have sinned *the sin unto death, and it is impossible that I should be renewed unto repentance.* Yesterday my mountain seemed to stand fast, the world appeared at my feet, and all that is in the world seemed vile and contemptible; and my heart was enlarged with a view of my attainments, and superiority to the children of vanity! How, why, wherefore, as in a moment, am I thus cast down into the Valley of the Shadow of Death? *O Lord, thou holdest mine eyes waking; I am so feeble that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of eternity, and the years that are past; I call to remembrance my song: and in the night I commune with mine own heart, and search out my spirits. Will the Lord absent himself for ever? and will he be no more entreated? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? and is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore?*

It was dreadful to hear his sighs and groans, and behold him cast into the lowest deep, having, as it were, *the sentence of condemnation in himself*, and seeing no way to escape, but only having his eyes open to a view of the infinite, never-ending horrors of reprobation. At length a flood of tears burst from his eyes, and he was constrained to exclaim in the anguish of his heart, I have sinned, I have sinned; I have exalted myself, I have forgotten who it was that *made me to differ*; *I will cry unto God with my voice, even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.*

At that instant, the portal of the dungeon again opened, and the giant approached with a countenance full of wrath and indignation. Wretch, exclaimed he, that hast sinned against light and conviction, dost thou still presume to call upon the Most High to save thee? Thou hast not faith to receive a blessing, were he even willing to hearken unto thee. At these words, Theophilus once more sunk down in despair; but through the mercy of God he presently recovered himself, and kneeling down, earnestly offered up the following prayer—Almighty God, who hast pronounced that *this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.* I confess, that it is not for want of evidence and proof of thy faithfulness, that I am fallen into the darkness of

unbelief: it is because I love not the light, it is because my deeds are evil, and my heart puffed up with pride and self-sufficiency, that I see not the light and glory of heaven. O Lord, I confess the sin of unbelief. I call upon thee, not for more proofs of thy faithfulness, but that thou wouldst by thy almighty grace destroy the enmity which is in my heart against thyself and thy holy gospel, and so enable me once more to see the beauty of holiness shining forth in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord. Merciful Saviour, I now confess before thee mine unbelief, I rank it among my sins, yea, as the fountain-head of all my sins; I confess it; and I now turn unto thee, nothing doubting that faith is thy gift, and that thou wilt not withhold thy precious gifts from any who look singly to thy grace for faith to receive thee, the light of heaven, and to be delivered from the darkness of sin.

The spirit of the young pilgrim revived in the utterance of this petition; and rising from his knees, he drew his sword, and rushed upon his adversary. And at the same instant, a ray of light from heaven pierced the gloom of the horrible cavern. The fiend drew back as Theophilus rushed forward, alarmed still more by the flash of heavenly light than by the vehemence of his opponent. Then quickly flinging to the massy gate, he proceeded to lock the many locks with which he was wont to make fast his infer-

nal dungeon; and with a dreadful roar mustered all his household to come to his assistance.

At this moment it came into the mind of Theophilus, that he had a key that had been given unto him with his armour, named the key of Promise; and he now determined to apply this key to the locks of the dungeon of Doubting Castle. Now these locks were called the locks of Doubt, and there were many of them; some of which were of a temporal nature, others of a nature spiritual and eternal. Now then, for the first time, the young man experienced the all-sufficiency of the covenant of promise, for every lock of doubt was easily turned as he pronounced, *All things that you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.* And now, having opened all the locks, he uttered these words, *I can do all things through Jesus Christ that strengtheneth me:* when applying his shoulders to the massy gate, he at once burst asunder its vast bars and bolts, and rushed manfully upon his adversaries.

Then I saw that many blows were given and received on both sides, and fiery darts were shot from the castle against Theophilus; but he made good his way, and received all the arrows upon the shield of faith. Every moment the light of heaven shone brighter upon the scene of warfare, nor did Theophilus quit the combat, till he had cast down all his opponents. Then kneeling

down, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and pronounced—Mighty Captain of the Lord's hosts, I had heard of thee with the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye hath seen thee, and not another. Now I know and acknowledge, that thou alone art omnipotent to save. Glory be to thee, thou invincible champion, who hast delivered thy unworthy servant from the dungeon of misery, from the den of infernal lions. Grant, I beseech thee, that from this time forth *I may remember, and be confounded, and never open my mouth any more to boast, complain, or censure; because of my shame.*

Then I saw, that as it were a cloud and pillar of fire illuminated that dreadful road, by which Theophilus had strayed to the dungeon of Despair; and he followed the divine guidance, till he once more set his foot on the King's highway. But who can describe his sensations, as he surveyed in clear light, the snares, the pits, the gins, the precipices, among which he had wandered in thick darkness, and from which he had been so miraculously preserved; while thousands were beheld by him dead and dying in the regions of *Infidelity*. For this was the name of the gigantic fiend, which had endeavoured to destroy the young pilgrim, and who for that purpose had sent out his subtle colleague, Spiritual-pride, who turned Theophilus out of the highway.

You have unquestionably heard of Giant

Despair, who afflicted poor Christian in former times, and who was afterwards slain by Great-heart. Now the estate of that Giant came by inheritance to the Giant Infidelity, who rebuilt Doubting Castle, and very much enlarged its dungeon and premises. The father of this fiend was called Superstition, the author of *the mystery of iniquity*, a consummate hypocrite and hireling, who devised *to bring the way of truth into contempt*, by assuming the mask of religion. Thus he prejudiced and exasperated men against the Celestial King and his servants, by *mixing tares among the wheat*, which the carnal eye could not distinguish. Thus he had brought a dreadful persecution upon the King's servants, in which however he and his party at last suffered far more than those whom he would have destroyed. For Religion and Superstition were now indiscriminately persecuted by this Giant Infidelity, the son of the Giant Superstition. There were also now two sons born to the Giant Infidelity, the elder, Giant Anarchy, and the younger, Giant Lawlessness. These three had Theophilus engaged, and defeated; and happy, it might seem, had it been for the next generation, if he had given them their death-blow. But the Celestial King alone *knoweth the times and the seasons*, and permits his adversaries to prosper, till they have chastised, distinguished, and roused his people; till they have filled up the measure of their iniquity, and by oppression

made even the carnal heart to have some feeling for Him, who alone can redeem from the iron rod of the destroyer.

Now I saw, in my dream, that, no sooner had Theophilus returned to the King's highway, than he set up a pillar hard by the stile over which he had passed; to be a warning to desponding pilgrims to renew their faith by prayer.

INSCRIPTION.

Ye sons of misery, silenc'd by despair,
Who deem it vain to raise the faithless prayer,
This moment break the spell, this moment kneel,
And cry for pardon, that no faith you feel,
As chief of crimes; thus unbelief arrest,
And lo, the present Saviour stands confess'd.
'Tis not for want of proof you disbelieve,
But faithlessness confess, and faith receive;
For this the condemnation surely proves,
Who walks in darkness, deeds of darkness loves.

CHAP. XII.

THEOPHILUS now betook himself to ascend the hill, which rose from the river; and, as he walked, he read in his book, and lifted up his voice in prayer and thanksgiving. Now he had not proceeded far, before one called after him, and beckoned to him to stop. So he waited till the person came up, who thus addressed him; I wish to thank you, Sir, for the service you have performed for poor pilgrims, and for myself in particular. I was at no great distance from you, though you perceived me not, while you were engaged in that great work of charity; and without flattery, now that I have read the inscription, I must confess, that you have most happily hit upon the latent spring of all unbelief. The deceiver of the world has now received from you a foil, from which, I am certain, he will not easily recover. Blessed be that heavenly wisdom, which has endowed you with this extraordinary penetration and discernment into *the depths of Satan*. Hold fast this eminent

spirituality; and you have the sure promise that you shall be *one of the greatest in the kingdom of glory*. *Whoso humbleth himself shall be exalted*. Value not therefore yourself upon your other superlative gifts, for gifts shall pass away; but only upon that uncommon grace of humility, by which you have been taught to discern, that self-sufficiency is at the bottom of infidelity, and of every sin.

You would have me then, replied Theophilus, value myself upon my vileness. Speak, Sir, is that your meaning? Not so, replied the stranger; but I would have you take the comfort of knowing that your deep humility is inseparably connected with the most exalted glory; for our Sovereign Lord hath joined these two things indissolubly together. Then did Theophilus turn quickly upon the stranger, and drawing his sword, Stand back, he exclaimed, thou subtle deceiver; for *thou art an offence unto me*. Think not, a second time, to make a fool of me, by teaching me to glory in myself. *I will glory only in the Lord Jesus, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*. I will glory only in my Lord and Saviour, in whose strength I will now level thee with the dust. Thus speaking, Theophilus rushed upon Spiritual-pride, and with a furious blow felled him to the earth, exclaiming, *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts*. These words broke the spell of the arch deceiv-

er; the old serpent was made manifest, and fled to conceal himself, detected and exposed.

Then did Theophilus once more give glory to the Discerner of Spirits, and Revealer of Sin in all its subtle and circumventing forms. And now, having been exercised in the combat, and in the use of spiritual armour and weapons, he was taught by experience the grand principle, that *of himself he could do nothing, but every thing through him who is all in all*, essential wisdom, sanctification, and redemption! Blessed are they who are thus disciplined *to become strong in the Lord and in the power of his might: to become fools, that they may be wise; weak, that they may be strong; poor, that they may be rich; and empty, that they may be full.* This is the believer's *white stone, which no one understandeth, who receiveth it not.*

He now pursued his journey, and presently reached the summit of the hill, where he stood still for a while to rest himself: and casting his eyes once more upon the vale of peace and calm delight, through which he had travelled before he turned out of the King's highway, thus he expressed the emotions of his soul, *Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints; thou hast taught me by experience, that thou comfortest, and castest down, in fatherly wisdom and love. Thou art leading us to happiness in the path of holiness and humility. It is for this, that thou now raisest and comfortest, and now castest*

down and depressoest our souls; that holiness and humility may lead us hand in hand. O that I may walk in this thy way for evermore: so shall my path henceforwards be the path of undisturbed peace and serenity. O create me now at length holy and humble, that thy face may set no more in clouds and thick darkness; but that the glory of thy presence may shine upon me in that abiding peace and consolation, which the world can neither give nor take away.

Theophilus having uttered this petition, cast his eyes towards the region of darkness from which he had been delivered. From the eminence on which he now stood, *he beheld, and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke.*

This dreadful sight amazed him exceedingly, and he had recourse to his book for instruction. So he opened it, and read, *Great, O Lord, are thy judgments, and cannot be expressed: therefore souls that will not be reformed, have erred. For when unrighteous men thought to oppress the holy nation: they being shut up in their houses, the prisoners of darkness, and fettered with the bonds of a long night, lay there, exiled from the eternal providence. For while they supposed to lie hid in their secret sins, they were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished, and troubled with strange apparitions. For neither might the corner that*

held them, keep them from fear: but noises as of waters falling down, sounded about them, and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances. No power of the fire might give them light: neither could the bright flames of the stars endure to lighten that horrible night, an image of the darkness which should afterwards receive them: but yet were they unto themselves more grievous than the darkness. Theophilus now understood, that the dreadful darkness of Infidelity was a judgment from heaven upon all who would not be reformed; and that for this cause God had sent them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, who received not the truth in the love of it. O Lord! he exclaimed, take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

Scarcely had he uttered these words, than who should appear in sight, but Philadelphus himself? Need I describe the joy with which the two dear friends again met? Theophilus rejoiced to see him, as though *he had been dead, and were alive again*; and Philadelphus rejoiced as though his guardian angel had appeared to him. For firm is the friendship, and sweet the communion of those souls, which are united together, not by the selfish bonds of worldly friendship, but by sympathy, by divine love, by the hope of becoming companions and fellow-heirs of immortality. How strange is it that brethren, who are members one of another, cemented by *one head, one spirit, one*

faith, one baptism, one hope of their calling, never to be separated—so frequently *fall out by the way*! Not so Theophilus and Philadelphus: the enemy, who sows divisions among the brethren, and frequently blinds the children of God, that they should not in this world know each other, was not permitted to disturb their sacred friendship.

Now I saw that Theophilus was eager to hear from his friend, an account of the trials he had met with; and in what manner he had made his escape from the snares of the enemy.

My brother, rejoined Philadelphus, you saw in what manner I was torn from you by Sir Worldly-conformity; and I will confess that at first my heart inclined to go with him, though I parted at the same time from you with reluctance. The truth is, I was overcome by his condescension, dazzled by his splendour, and captivated by the pleasures, honours, and riches, which he promised.

Do not think I will upbraid you, replied Theophilus. I too have fallen; never more, I hope, to lift up my voice in judgment upon a brother. But go on, tell me what befel you at his house.

When I first arrived there, replied Philadelphus, my head seemed to turn giddy in my new situation. The hurry, parade, and dissipation, to which I was introduced, drowned all power of reflection. In the morning I was taken to

visit the grand associates of Sir Worldly: and, after an intemperate dinner, I sat down to cards; from which I was hurried to the theatre, or to the ball-room. No time for consideration, no moment for serious thought. At last, I plucked up courage to enquire of Sir Worldly, whether this mode of living were consistent with the life of a pilgrim. Many professed pilgrims, he replied, countenance us in the building of sumptuous houses, in the displaying of magnificent furniture, and in frequent attendance upon our mixed parties and amusements. I believe, replied I, that some pilgrims endeavour as much as may be to avoid the charge of singularity, that they may have a more easy access to those, whom they wish to edify and draw off from vanity. I think I know them full as well as you do, my child, replied Sir Worldly. And so they tell you, that they conform to our course of life, in order to benefit our souls! One word for our conversion, and two for their own pleasure. They may impose upon you; but they do not all deceive even themselves, and none of them dupe me. If they would have influence with me and my friends, I assure you, the best course they could take, would be to act, at once, consistently with their profession, and with the example of their Lord and Master, who was *holy, undefiled, separate from sinners*. If they court us, we shall despise them; if they court us not, we shall reverence them. This is the way

of the world, my child; and I assure you, when I lie upon my death-bed, I will not send for such lukewarm, trimming time-servers. In that hour I will commit my soul to the care of Evangelist. But why do I talk of death? have I not many good long years before me, after which it will be time enough for me to think of repentance, when I can lose nothing in this life, that is to be enjoyed? My religion is to make sure of both worlds: of this, as long as I stay in it; and of the next, when there is an end of this. And my plan I think to be the wisest which a man can take. I am very sincere; what I profess, I practise; and if I were to take up the pilgrim's cross, I would not disgrace it by shrinking from the standard of God.

I long, said Theophilus, to hear how you escaped out of the clutches of Sir Worldly.

That night, continued Philadelphus, that very night, in which Sir Worldly was promising himself many years, wherein to enjoy his possessions and pleasures, after a sad scene of intemperance, he was seized with a fever.

THEO. And did he send for Evangelist?

He did so, replied Philadelphus, and most earnestly requested his attendance. But before the pious minister of God could reach the house, Sir Worldly-conformity expired in all the horrors of despair. O, my brother, I shall never forget the agonies of the dying man. He called for cold water, again and again, to cool

his feverish burning tongue; but no relief could be obtained. He expired, alternately invoking and blaspheming the holy name of the Saviour of pilgrims. The view of his last agonies was insupportable; we fled in horror from his presence, and he breathed his last in solitude and desertion.

Poor man! rejoined Theophilus: but what became of you, my friend, after his death?

PHIL. Evangelist entered the house, a few moments after he had expired; and I ran to him, fell at his knees, and implored his protection. Nor did I implore it in vain. He enquired of me my name, and situation; and, presently recollecting me, he took me to his house.

THEO. I entreated him to search for, and endeavour to reclaim you.

PHIL. He told me so, dear brother; and bade me sin no more, lest a worse thing should befall me. Then he prayed that the Celestial King would pardon my transgressions, and enjoined me to escape for my life, and endeavour to overtake you. And blessed be the Shepherd of Israel, I have overtaken you much sooner than I expected. But now that I am with you, my brother, can you regard me again as you were wont to do, after my grievous transgression and fall? Alas, I hate myself; how can you love me?

Did you know, said Theophilus, all that has befallen me since we last parted, you might ra-

ther expect that I should desire of you to be regarded again as you were wont to esteem me. I have wandered from the King's highway, I have been puffed up, *I have exalted myself to heaven, and I have been cast down into hell.* What I have suffered, I cannot express. I once secretly indulged the thought that I had a remnant of my own righteousness, by which I differed from the men of this world, and which should not be taken from me. I would indeed gladly have patched it with new cloth. But now, my only comfort is, that my nakedness is covered from head to foot, by a new garment *without seam*: and my heart's desire now is, that *I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of God by faith.*

I feel, replied Philadelphus, the self-same thing, my brother. What a privilege it is to exchange robes with the Prince of heaven and earth! I never felt this come so home to me before, as it has done, since I suffered my late humiliating fall in the Town of Vanity.

I rejoice to hear thee say so, my friend, replied Theophilus: let us then unite our voices in prayer, and call upon our King, with holy earnestness of soul—*O Lord, before we were troubled we went astray. O that we may now keep thy commandments.* Draw us, Lord, unto thy love: before thee are our hearts; they struggle, but of themselves they can do nothing: do thou, *what*

they cannot do. We ask, we seek, we knock. Thou who causest us to ask, cause us to receive. Thou who givest us to seek, give us to find. Thou who teachest us to knock, open to us knocking. To whom dost thou give, if thou deniest them that ask? To whom dost thou open, if thou shuttest to them that knock? From thee we have the hungering and thirsting for thine own righteousness: to whom wilt thou grant it, if not to those who hunger and thirst for it? From thee we have the desire: O may we have the fruition.—O Lord, root and stablish us now at last, after all our humiliations, in thy kingdom, according to thy word, and never more take thy Holy Spirit from us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.



CHAP. XIII.



THE two friends now proceeded on their journey, till they reached an eminence from which they had a most unexpected and delightful prospect. They beheld a chain of lofty mountains, whose summits seemed as it were to pierce the higher regions of the sky. These mountains were no other than the Delectable Mountains, which the spies who searched the promised inheritance passed over; from the extreme of which commanding range, Moses beheld another Canaan, another promised inheritance, even *the land which is very far off*. The air about these mountains is remarkably clear and salubrious, the springs clear as crystal, the weather ever mild and delightful. Here dwell shepherds among the cedars of God, ever green and flourishing; and the tree of life, and the clear river of the water of life, afford them delicious sustenance. Yea, in these mountains the Prince of pilgrims vouchsafes to manifest himself, and the shepherds walk with God, and God walketh

with them. Heavenly notes are not unfrequently heard in the air, and such voices and harpings as *ear hath not heard*. Every object around is cast in the mould of glory, and is an image, an earnest, a foretaste, of glories, *which eye hath not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive: but God revealeth them by his Spirit to those who can receive them*. Blessed are the flocks which are fed by these heavenly-minded shepherds, and which drink of *the pure water of life*, which flows from the Delectable Mountains. All here is serenity, peace, and calm delight. Now the path to the Celestial City is over these mountains of perfect peace and glorious hope; and yet it is not every pilgrim that is privileged with a full view of all their glories. They only have this privilege in its highest degree, who, not in some things, but *in all things, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, make their requests known unto God, casting all their care and staying their hearts upon him*. To these, *the Father of glory is faithful to give the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the knowledge of his Son, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of his inheritance in the saints*. A sweet and gentle gale from these Delectable Mountains cheered the hearts of the young pilgrims, while they were in the act of self-renunciation; and they hastened their pace to reach the inviting region before the sun set.

Now I saw, that, when they were arrived at the foot of the mountains, the shepherds came out to meet them, and saluted them, inviting them to take up their abode in their habitation for the night. To this they gladly consented; and having received refreshment, the shepherds strictly questioned them respecting their motives for undertaking the life of pilgrims, and concerning the road by which they had come, together with the difficulties and temptations they had met with.

They then informed the young pilgrims, that it was the King's pleasure that they should remain in that place for some time, and receive further instruction and edification from them, whom he hath appointed and qualified by divine gifts, *to edify the saints until they should come to the perfect measure of the fulness of the stature of the divine image.* We trust, they added, that you are both true pilgrims, having this seal, that you are *poor in spirit*, and *pure in heart*, through the special grace of Him, who *worketh all in all*. We trust therefore that, though you are very young, we shall nevertheless be able to shew you glorious views and prospects during your abode with us. We have indeed manifested excellent things to pilgrims, young as yourselves; yea, we once had a young pilgrim among us, who pointed out to us, from our observatory, marvellous objects which we had not ourselves perceived. And for your benefit, we will inform

you in what manner he was enabled to attain so surpassing a measure of discernment. For he himself has left the record of his attainments in our hands, and it is to this effect. *When I perceived that I could not otherwise attain wisdom, except God gave her me, (and that was a part of wisdom also to know whose gift she was,) I prayed unto the Lord, and besought him, and with my whole heart I said; Give me wisdom that sitteth by thy throne, and reject me not from among thy children, for I thy servant and son of thine hand-maid, am a feeble person, and of a short time, and too young for the understanding of judgment and laws.* In this manner that favoured young person, having *the preparation of the heart from the Lord* to love wisdom, sought her early, as the most excellent gift of the Most High, with his whole heart. And what shall I say that he found, in finding her?—*The promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come.* For so pleased was our King with this request of the child, *to give him wisdom, that with her he freely gave him all things.* And it now stands upon record, in order to exemplify what great things our blessed King will do for the youngest and meanest of his servants, who shall in the same manner love Heavenly-Wisdom, and take her always at her word, and never grieve her pure and gentle spirit. Verily wisdom shall not only shower upon such a one all her treasures; but she will so veil her glory, as, even in the present life, to make her-

self manifest to him; and her beauty surpasseth knowledge. To obtain a sight of her, is to love her, to become like unto her, to be changed from glory to glory; but to see her at length unshorn of her beams, is to be changed into her very image. *Every one who hath this hope, purifieth himself, even as God is pure.*

While the shepherd Experience pronounced these words, I saw that Theophilus could no longer restrain his tears, the meaning of which the shepherds well understood, and were not displeased; assuredly gathering, that wisdom was not far from him, who was so deeply affected by a sense of having grieved her gentle spirit; and that none would so lament after her, to whom the beauty of holiness had never been revealed.

Then I saw that the shepherd Heavenly-mind began to converse with Theophilus in the following manner. If I am not mistaken, my son, you are now lamenting the disappearance of Heavenly-Wisdom.

Oh, replied Theophilus, I have once beheld the lovely image of *that wisdom, which is from above*, fairer than the dawn, more bright than the morning star. But I have erred from her ways; and it is now long since her face shone manifestly upon me; and I fear lest she should never return again.

You do well then to lament after her, said Heavenly-mind; for *she is precious above rubies*

to all those who find her and hold her fast. She hath the gift of prophecy, and understandeth all mysteries and knowledge; she bestoweth all faith, and all bountifulness. Hath she bestowed upon you any of these excellent gifts, and again withdrawn her hand from you?

THEO. I am young and poor; others have received these endowments largely at her hands; but, for myself, I can only say, that I have seen her excellence and loved her; and once trusted that I was loved of her.

HEAVENLY-MIND. *She taught you, perhaps, what good thing you should do, that you might have eternal life.* She displayed the perfection of her glorious law, and the reasonableness of loving God supremely, and your neighbour as yourself. And you received from her the comfortable assurance, *that you had kept all her commandments from your youth upwards.*

Ah, do not banter with me, replied Theophilus; it is true, the glory of the perfection of her righteousness shone about me: but before her glory all my light expired. She that said to the youth, who was, in the sight of men, eminently rich in good works, *One thing thou lackest if thou wouldst be perfect;* the same counselled me to the same effect. And surely I needed that counsel much more than he did; for which of her commandments had I kept from my infancy?

HEAVENLY-MIND. Well, and what was

that one thing, for which she would have you renounce all that you had of yourself, or ever could have?

THEO. Why she said, If you will renounce all self-sufficiency, *and follow me in regeneration, you shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit eternal life.*

HEAVENLY-MIND. And did she moreover convince you, that, if you had, in the very letter, kept her commandments, you could not by perseverance deserve everlasting life?

THEO. Yea, she fully persuaded me, that *in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.* And she positively declared, that she would either bring me to the test of spiritual unsinning obedience, and judge me without mercy; or else turn all my dependences upside down, *and make first last, and last first.*

HEAVENLY-MIND. And did she make it plain, that she had power to do so great things for you? and did she say, how she would save you?

THEO. At first she pressed me by unanswerable arguments, which I am persuaded no creature could gainsay, to acknowledge her first position, *Let God be true, and every man a liar.* Unless she could make me understand, and feel this first principle, she said, I should remain a very fool as long as I lived; and, after death, be held in *everlasting contempt.* So I preferred the

present contempt of the world, to the abasement which is everlasting. Now I had no sooner yielded to her in this point, than she proceeded to teach me that the saving righteousness, which *with men is unattainable, is not impossible with God*; that the All-wise knoweth *how to be just and at the same time the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus*. Yea, she promised, that *I should see righteousness look down from heaven, and mercy and truth kiss each other*.

HEAVENLY-MIND. And could you believe that a thing so incomprehensible could ever be realized? The cherubim, who were stationed nearest to the mercy-seat, *desired to look into these very things*; but they were not able to comprehend them. Yea, before the grand manifestation of Heavenly-Wisdom upon earth, not a creature in the whole universe was *found worthy to open the seals of the covenant of grace, or even to look thereon*. Only the self-sufficient children of darkness profess to be wise above the light eternal and uncreate. There was a time when even the children of the kingdom said in amazement, *If they who are most rich in good works cannot save themselves, who then may hope for salvation?*

THEO. She convinced me, that *all things are possible with God*; and then proceeded to instruct me wherein this new state, in which she would place me, consisted. And it is well called *Regeneration*: for flesh and blood hath not com-

prehended it; no, nor understanding conceived it; nor can any thing less than the inspiration of divine wisdom herself make known the blessedness of this translation into the kingdom of peace, hope, righteousness, and love.

HEAVENLY-MIND. Inform us how this revolution was effected in your soul, this renewal to repentance and faith brought about?

THEO. While I was thinking how she would pour new wine into my old vessel, and how she would make perfect my faulty garments, she surprised me with a new vessel, wrought of pure gold, and filled to the brim with new wine; and with it, she spread before me a new garment, without spot or blemish, *more white and clean than the work of any fuller upon earth*. And having shewn me these glorious objects, she smiled, and enquired, whether I was willing to make an exchange with her, and give my earthly vessel for her golden one, and my polluted garments for her vesture of light and glory?

HEAVENLY-MIND. And had you a mind to make the exchange?

THEO. Why, at first, I could not believe that such was her real intention, so strange her proposal appeared to me; besides, I felt my rags cling closely to my flesh, and nature whispered that it would be counted a shame to me, to be stripped naked, and not to have a coat which I could call my own, however inferior it might be to hers. But she persevered; and at length I

took her at her word; and blessed be her name, that she prevailed to persuade me to do so. Thus it was that *all things became new to my soul*; and I found myself clothed in the righteousness of a man that had never once sinned in all his life. And this I then found to be precisely what I wanted: but *Woe to the rebellious children*, said she, *that take counsel, but not of me, and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin.* Alas! that I have now grieved my blessed teacher, and *walked unworthy of my high calling.* O that she may not entirely have forsaken me! Shepherds of Jerusalem, tell me, will not her love towards those whom she hath much benefited, be turned into exceeding enmity, if they forget all her loving-kindness, and transgress her precepts?

HEAVENLY-MIND. It is our commission and delight, to speak peace in the name of the Prince of peace, to every *broken and contrite heart.* It is no uncommon thing for pilgrims to be thus brought low. While their first love remains warm and fervent, they *seek not their own*; they look not in complacency upon themselves; but looking stedfastly upon Jesus, they abide in glory, and reflect the divine image of heavenly righteousness, as the face of Moses shone gloriously in the presence of God. While they thus continue to look away from themselves, and have their eyes fixed upon the perfection of beauty and holiness, they become conformed to the

image which is before their eyes, while he who is thus stedfastly beheld, becomes *sin for them, who knew no sin*. The single eye of faith conducts all their sins to the cross, and attracts to them *the righteousness of God*. But alas! how soon does indwelling sin begin to whisper them, that they are *something of themselves* in comparison with others, though they be nothing! And thus are their eyes drawn from the view of the brazen serpent to that of their own foul and leprous nature. The hand which was lifted in dependance and prayer, is once more dropped, and the Amalekites again prevail. No sooner hath Peter believed and been blessed, than he is puffed up and falleth. The eye is drawn from the sight of God to the sight of self; and the view of sinful self it is, which now makes you feel remorse and fear. Remember then *how thou hast received at the first*; and in the same manner renew thy peace and consolation, fixing the single eye of faith once more upon the tree of life, which is here set by the Lord of the way, for the healing of all thy infirmities, and the renewal of thy strength.

Here is the tree, whose spreading height
Is fair and lovely to the sight.

Here is the tree, which fruit supplies,
Which he who tastes of, never dies.

Here is the tree, whence waters flow,
Of which who drink, thirst never know.

Here is the tree, whose leaves can heal
The curse which sinful mortals feel.

Here is the tree, on which to gaze,
Is to the cross your eye to raise.
Here is the tree, of which to take,
Of Jesus' self is to partake.
Here is the tree of life divine,
And be its treasures ever thine!

CHAP. XIV.

THE next morning, the shepherds thought fit to conduct the young pilgrims to the summit of Mount Promise. So they set off together, and soon arrived at the foot of this glorious mountain. Now I saw that, on one side of it, was another eminence, called Mount Presumption; and on the other side, a steep declivity, full of pits and precipices, and covered with dry bones. This valley was called Unbelief. Here were three pillars set up by the Champion of pilgrims, in commemoration of the temptations which he here overcame; and as a warning to pilgrims, neither to turn to the right hand nor to the left, nor to be diverted from their purpose in ascending the Mountain of Promise. The inscriptions upon these pillars the pilgrims read; and the first of them, at the entrance of the Valley of Unbelief, was, *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that cometh out of the mouth of God.*

What think you is the meaning of this warn-

ing? said the shepherds to Philadelphus. If I am not mistaken, he replied, after some consideration, the Prince of pilgrims here admonishes us, when we are in want and need, that his covenant contains a promise for the supply even of our bodily necessities, as it is written, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*

You have well answered, replied the shepherd Experience; and if you understand this promise, happy are you if you rely upon it. Remember then that you have no need to court the world for temporal provision; for while you walk in the royal way, you have the royal seal and security for provision for you and yours. Therefore learn to exercise faith, in respect to things small, as well as great. For your Lord loves to be trusted in; but alas! his sabbath is profaned, and his enemies are courted, because men will not believe that *he who hath given them his only Son, will also with him freely give them all things.* O ye of little faith, how is it that you do not understand that this way *hath the promise of this life, as well as of that which is to come?* Why will you not be redeemed from all evil; from solicitude for the morrow, as well as from the pains of hell?

The pilgrims now read the inscription upon the pillar at the foot of the Mountain of Presumption, *Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God:* and the shepherds desired Theophilus to explain the

words. It appears to me, he presently replied, that the tempter, when he found he could not shake the faith of our great Champion, would have pushed it into presumption. He would have had him so to depend upon the infallible word, as to deem the means of salvation derogatory to the free operation of divine power in fulfilling the promises.

You have given the true meaning of the tablet, replied the shepherd Experience: and now treasure up in your mind, that, although in God *you live, move, and have your being*, body and soul; nevertheless, it is in the use of his appointed means for the preservation of the one and the other: *and what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*

Then they read the inscription at the foot of Mount Promise, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* This inscription also Theophilus thus explained. The adversary, it seems, having found that he could not turn his mighty opponent either to the right, or to the left; and seeing that now the conqueror was upon the road to secure all the promises, attempted to insinuate that of the great things, on which he had an eye, all were not the Lord's to give. At least he would have him do homage for the dominion of the earth, which for a time had been made over to himself. But our Champion, by his reply, testified that he would rather decline the kingdom of this world,

than do homage to the enemy. Here we are reminded, what the world is, whose it is, and whence proceedeth the fashion of it. Here we may learn to rest *contented with the food and raiment*, which the blessed covenant ensures; and to beware of desiring to be rich and great, and of forming worldly connections in order to advance our temporal interests.

Act now according to these great lessons, replied the shepherd Experience, and you shall soon see the fulfilment and triumph of all the promises; yea, by what unforeseen and irresistible working *the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*. Violence and deceit may gain the start in the attainment of temporal power; but, in the issue, it will be proved that truth and meekness shall wear the crown. *If your delight be then in thrones and sceptres, O ye kings of the people, honour wisdom, that ye may reign for evermore.*

After this, I saw that the shepherds and pilgrims began to ascend the Mountain of Promise; and the shepherd Experience addressed Theophilus and Philadelphus—Children of our beloved King, you have in some measure already experienced, that *every good and perfect gift descendeth from above*; and, according to the simplicity of your dependance, have you either stood or fallen, been comforted or cast down. Still you come short of a full comprehension, and possession, of all your privileges. You are in-

deed under training to be convinced of your own utter emptiness, and of the fulness of the Redeemer. As he who strips off the coat of some kind of roots, discovers a second and another root within, so doth the Spirit of conviction lay bare successively the corruptions, of which our hearts consist. The Redeemer sitteth in your hearts, as a refiner of gold; and he will continue to sit there, until he shall have burned out every remnant of self-dependance, and you be *purified as by fire*. But blessed be his loving-kindness, as the work of extermination advances, by the same degrees another work is advancing within you. The new and spiritual heart is *renewed day by day*, and gradually occupies the space of the natural one. As a tree of life, it springs, it shoots, it buds, it blossoms, it bears fruit; *born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*. At last, it receives by faith all the promises, and as a fruitful vine, *casts its branches over the wall* into the paradise of glory, and abides in *the peace of God which passeth all understanding*. Young pilgrims, do not your hearts burn to obtain these abiding privileges, which belong to the covenant of promise?

Now I saw that, having reached the summit of the mountain, whom should they behold but the Lord of Mount Promise himself! He was seated under a *tree which beareth twelve manner of fruits, and the waters of life flowed from his*

throne. There stood about him, at some distance, a great company of persons; some clothed in purple and fine linen, with treasures in their hands; and others ragged and bare-footed. This concourse was occasioned by a notice, that the Lord of the Mountain was disposed to sell his possessions. And they, who had brought treasures with them, felt assured, that they should be able to outbid their poorer neighbours, and so had made sure of such estates as they desired.

Now the pilgrims waited with the company, until the Lord of the Mountain should make known, upon what terms he would dispose of his inheritance. But they secretly feared, lest their Lord should inflict punishment upon them, because they appeared in his presence, on this occasion, without the means of becoming purchasers.

Presently the King arose, and invited the company present to take a view of his estates. *Now the land was as the garden of Eden before them, as the goodly inheritance of Jacob, as valleys spread forth, as gardens by the river side, as the trees of lign aloes, which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.* The company were now still more eager to become purchasers of these delightful estates, having beheld their several advantages and beauties. So the King ordered them to retire back a little space, and he would make known upon what

terms he would part with his possessions. Then, after solemn silence and suspense, the Lord of the Mountain produced a roll; and having spread it open, he pronounced in the hearing of all the people—*Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Incline your ear and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. For my thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.* Thrice did the Lord of the Mountain proclaim these words: but the whole company remained in mute astonishment.

As for the rich men, who had come to purchase an inheritance with their wealth, I saw that they presently took offence, and having conferred with each other, unanimously agreed not to put themselves under an obligation to the Lord of the Mountain, *since their wealth extended not to him.* For, said they, he despiseth our riches, and would treat us like beggars, and bring us into contempt, if we should thus receive his lands without price. So the rich and the great speedily departed to their own place, and I saw them no more. Then I heard the Lord assever, *Verily I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for him who is rich before men to enter into the*

kingdom of heaven. With men this is impossible, to purchase eternal life.

After this, I saw that the poor men, who had no money, conferred together concerning the words of the King. What is the meaning, said they, of his proposal *to buy without money?* We cannot understand his intentions; neither dare we approach him, poor as we are, and ragged, and miserable, lest he should seize us, and sell us as slaves for our presumption. So they also went their way, and I saw them no more. Then did the Lord of the Hill pronounce aloud, *No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him. Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.*

These last words much affected the young pilgrims, who were now left alone with the shepherds, and they said one to the other, *To whom shall we go for eternal life, if we go not to him?* Let us take him at his word: he can but slay us; and it seems, if we go not to him, we shall not live. So I saw that they drew near to the King, pale and trembling, more like unto dead than living men; and so they stood before the Lord. Then I saw that report had not mistated the loving-kindness of the Lord of Mount Promise. *Full of grace and truth*, he cast an eye of compassion upon the pilgrims, and said, Fear not, but tell me what it is that you wish to purchase.

THEO. Blessed Lord, we desire to purchase *the sure mercies of David.*

THE KING. And what price do you offer for them?

THEO. The same which David himself paid.

THE KING. David was a king, the man after mine own heart; can you pay the price which he paid? If you offer his price the inheritance is yours.

THEO. *O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it thee: thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a troubled spirit: a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Sion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem.*

THE KING. I have said, and I will not, I cannot depart from my word. Forasmuch as you trust only in *Him that justifieth the ungodly, your faith is counted for righteousness, even as David's. It is of faith that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Stagger not at the promise of God through unbelief, but be strong in faith, giving glory to God, and be fully persuaded, that what I have promised, I am able also to perform.*

Then I saw that the Lord of the Mountain produced the deed of the conveyance of the inheritance of David, whereby he made over to Theophilus and Philadelphus the sure mercies of David. And he read the covenant aloud to them, and made them understand, and notice

the stability of it: for it was confirmed with an oath, and sealed with his own blood. It promised the will and the power to arrive at, and take possession of the inheritance. And there were clauses containing promises for counsel, for wisdom, for power, for holiness, yea for every thing that was needful for the receivers of the inheritance, from the day the inheritance was made over to them, till they should be put in full possession of it.

Then did the King present them each with a roll of conveyance, and thus addressed them. My little children, remember well, and treasure up in your hearts, that, though your inheritance has cost you nothing, it has however cost me dear indeed. Know, that you stand in my place, as I have stood in yours; this is your security. In your stead and place I fulfilled all the conditions, by which only you could be redeemed from bondage, and restored to the inheritance of Paradise. For you I fulfilled the whole law of righteousness; for you I tasted of death; for you I rose from the grave; for you I make intercession continually before the throne of grace. Degrade not then, by arrogating any part of the price of the purchase to yourselves, the immense ransom which I have paid for your inheritance. I have redeemed it with my blood, and I freely give it to you, and all things appertaining to it. Try my faithfulness; put it to the proof; in all and every difficulty and doubt,

have recourse to the roll which I have given you. Mark every clause which it contains; plead before me my faithfulness to fulfil every promise which it conveys; and lo, *all things are yours, the promise of this life as well as of that which is to come; all is yours. For who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died; yea rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God; who also maketh intercession for you? Who shall separate you from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay in all these things, you are more than conquerors through him that loved you. Now then be assured, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, the Lord of all promise.*

Then did the Lord of the Mountain shew to Theophilus and Philadelphus, the immoveable and everlasting rock, upon which the mountain was founded. He also pointed out to them the delightful estate called Godliness with Contentment, from which they should receive, even during their pilgrimage, riches a hundredfold more satisfactory than the possessions of the greatest man upon earth. He then put into their hands a glass, and gave them a glimpse, to the left, of the furnace of everlasting fire, from whence

they had been delivered; and to the right, he shewed them at a distance the Everlasting Mountains, where there is fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

Theophilus and Philadelphus gave glory, thanksgiving, and praise, to the Lord of all promise; and returned to the shepherds, marvelling at the amazing fulness and freeness of the Covenant of Promise.

And now the glorious orb of day retired to his pavilion of purple clouds; and the shadows of the mountains extended themselves far and wide; while the distant sound of tinkling folds, and of the pipes of shepherds praising the King of Glory, were wafted through the serene and tranquil atmosphere. It was such an hour of calm repose, and as favourable to meditation and enlargement of heart, as was that night, the glory of all nights, in which *the shepherds were abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock, when lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men.*

The stars of glory, and the majestic lamp of night, were reflected in the still waters of the lake, which winds round the foot of the mountain; and the pilgrims descended into a grove of lofty pines, which environs the lake. The

chequered light of the grove, and the rustling of the leaves, as the breeze from the mountain sighed among them, added to the solemnity and grandeur of the scene.

They had not advanced far in the grove, before they heard, at a little distance, the wild airs of an Eolian harp, and one sweetly chanting the words of the Psalmist, *O Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of Man, that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels, to crown him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands.*

Theophilus enquired of the shepherds from whom that sweet hymn proceeded. It is the shepherd Contemplation, replied they, and we have purposely conducted you to him, that he may engage your minds to meditate in the word of God day and night, and learn the wonderful things of his law. For this is the will of him that called you out of darkness into his marvellous light, that you should now give yourselves wholly to these glorious concerns, and concentrate all your faculties in meditation upon the great truths which must influence your whole life and conversation. So they brought the young pilgrims to the grotto of the shepherd Contemplation, which was hewn out of a rock by the side of the lake; and a small clear stream flowed by the side of his habitation.

Venerable pastor, said the shepherds, the

wise Master Builder, who divideth to every man his proper work for the benefit of his church, has endowed you with wisdom to discover and describe the Sovereign Good, and the means of attaining it. Let these young pilgrims now understand and feel, how far the wisdom which is from above, surpasseth and *bringeth to nought* all that men account to be wisdom and knowledge. Declare unto them, how *when the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching* to flash the light of divine Truth and Righteousness into the kingdom of darkness. As they have this day received a more perfect knowledge of the divine faith, let them also now discern the glory and divinity of the eternal law of righteousness, and be moved alike to admire, love, and fulfil, all holiness and virtue.

The benign shepherd was well pleased with their request, and having taken the young pilgrims by the hand, and seated them near him, he raised his voice, and thus gave glory to God.

Of man the highest good, the end supreme,
The glory of our nature, is my theme.
Along the tide of time I move mine eyes,
As wisdom's sons in proud succession rise,
While, swelling still, the floods of human woe
Burst every barrier, and all-conquering flow.
But who is He, of lowly air and mien,
On yon high mount, above the surges seen?
No haughty sages in his presence stand,
To humble multitudes he waves his hand;

Of man the highest good, the end supreme,
From earth's foundation undisclos'd his theme.
Of happiness the prize *that* man hath found,
Who doth in deep humility abound,
Who knows, himself how vile, his God how just;
Pleads guilty, and on mercy founds his trust.
Thus they who mourn, in depth of mourning find
Sweet unexpected comfort sooth their mind;
Waters of comfort, flowing deep and wide,
As sink the swellings of engender'd pride.
His too the promise of this fleeting life,
Whom passion fires not to vindictive strife.
Pride, only pride, insane contention fires;
But lowliness, forbearance long inspires.
And harmony, and beatific love bestow
A foretaste of celestial bliss below.
Theirs too the gracious promise to be fed,
Whose spirits hunger for celestial bread.
Who thirst for righteousness, ne'er thirst in vain,
They who imbibe it never thirst again.
But cursed he, whose unrelenting heart
Does not that mercy, which it needs, impart.
Eternal mercy they alone shall know,
Who prompt forgiveness, and like pity shew.
Bless'd be that spotless soul, that spirit pure,
Which shall the presence of its Judge endure,
Wash'd in the laver of almighty grace:
Such, only such, shall see Jehovah's face.
And blessed ye, who heavenly ardour feel,
The breach of discord and of strife to heal.
You are the offspring of essential love,
The holy temple of the seraph Dove:
You with the Prince of peace one labour share,
And name of brethren to Messiah bear.
Fear not, my friends, the world's contemptuous frown,
Who shares my sorrows, shall partake my crown.

For righteousness, endure reproach and shame,
And endless glory in my triumph claim.
Now must humility with pride engage,
Now love with selfishness must warfare wage,
That earth's misguided sons at length may find,
These are the principles which bless mankind,
Of earthly wisdom the direct reverse,
Heaven's richest blessing for hell's direst curse.
A beacon you to countless vessels stand,
Of light a column you to every land,
Of warring elements sustain the shock,
A tower erect on truth's eternal rock.
Let every power of earth and hell assail,
Against my words they never shall prevail,
Till by all nations it shall stand confess'd,
Of these beatitudes the sons are bless'd.

CHAP. XV.

THUS Theophilus and Philadelphus passed their time with the shepherds, experiencing more and more of the reality of the powers of the world to come, and growing in grace and holiness.

Here they had an opportunity of witnessing the delightful occupation of the shepherds, their heavenly intercourse and communion, and their services to the pilgrims who were travelling to the Celestial City. Who that has not himself been an eye witness, can describe the joy which those shepherds excited, who going forth to the cities round about prevailed upon any of their inhabitants to become pilgrims, and conducted them to these mountains, in their way to the Heavenly Jerusalem.

The return of these shepherds to the mountains, leading the redeemed of the Lord to Mount Sion, excited a sensation corresponding to the joy which is felt in the kingdom of heaven over every returning sinner. The view of this

grateful occupation, and sympathy with the benevolence of the shepherds, soon excited a secret wish in the hearts of the young pilgrims, to devote themselves to the same employment. It was not long before they opened their hearts to each other, and after much conversation together, and prayer to the Prince of pilgrims, to direct them in this great affair, they communicated their wish to the friendly shepherds. It was a calm and beautiful evening, and the shepherds were seated under a spreading cedar tree, which crowns a little green hill, near the lake that winds among the mountains. Their flocks were feeding before them, and seemed to listen with delight to their alternate hymns to the Prince of shepherds.

In this manner then did Theophilus speak his own mind, and that of his brother, to the shepherds—

THEO. Dear and honoured pastors, how shall we thank you for the many favours which we have received? The Prince of shepherds alone is able, and assuredly will reward all your kindness to us. Forgive us, if we presume to request one more favour from you.

SHEPHERDS. Inform us what is the request which you have to make.

THEO. If we have found favour in your sight, admit us, we entreat you, into the fellowship of your society; and allow us to share your labours for the glory of your King, and the salvation of his flock.

SHEPHERDS. You ask a high thing, and we must enquire of you, what is your motive for desiring this perilous charge?

THEO. We trust that we ourselves have experienced the unspeakable blessing of *being called from outer darkness, into the marvellous light of the Gospel*; and our hearts burn with the desire to warn those who are perishing, as we ourselves were, to escape for their lives.

SHEPHERDS. By what means would you attempt to win them? Know you, that *whoso winneth souls is wise*?

THEO. *We would take heed to ourselves and to our doctrine.*

SHEPHERDS. Beware of adding to, or diminishing from the words of the Saviour. *Speak you must as the oracles of God*, and in the name of the Lord of life, call forth the living from among the dead. And hear you they will, if moreover you be *ensamples to the flock*. For thus saith the Lord, *If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth; let them return unto thee, but return thou not to them; and I will make thee to this people a fenced, brazen wall, and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee to save thee.*

Well, we are not displeased with the desire which you have now expressed, and we likewise approve of the means by which you propose to accomplish your design; but we would have you

well premonished of the many difficulties which you will have to encounter, as well as of the awful responsibility of our calling.

THEO. Honoured pastors, vouchsafe now to impart to us this necessary instruction.

SHEPHERDS. At that fearful hour, when every enemy pressed upon, and menaced the Prince of pilgrims, then, then it was, that we ourselves, trembling through the fear of man, witnessed his amazing fortitude. That was the hour, in which he chose, at once, to exemplify and declare the undaunted courage, which is necessary to all those who *follow him whithersoever he goeth*. As the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, he then faced the whole legion which pressed him on every side. With a look and a tone, which reduced to insignificance the arm of flesh that was lifted against him, he premonished us, in the face of the enraged multitude, of the warfare, to which he would soon call every one of his shepherds. *I say unto you, my friends, be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do; but I will forewarn you whom you shall fear: fear Him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea I say unto you, fear Him. Behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves; be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves.* Theophilus and Philadelphus, feel you that faith which overcometh the world? Can you despise its terrors, can you treat its *friendship as enmity with God?*

Can you disregard and encounter all its vain reasonings, *the traditions of men, the rudiments of the world, and the oppositions of science falsely so called*, with one and the same irresistible answer, *Thus saith the Lord?* O it is hard to wield the sword of the Spirit; and still more hard to confine your warfare to this one only almighty weapon. *Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.* Are your hearts prepared to meet the rancorous and ferocious enmity of *all that is in the world* against the Cross of *the Righteousness of God*, by which the world is condemned to the agonies of crucifixion?

THEO. Pray for us, that we may be endowed with that divine faith which overcometh the world.

SHEPHERDS. It is hard even to understand the exceeding sinfulness of the world; but it is still more difficult to keep yourselves from being entangled with it. But unless *you purge yourselves from these*, you cannot be *vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* Young men, are you determined *to flee youthful lusts*, and are you prepared to grapple with *the corruption which is in the world through concupiscence?* Think not that they *who promise liberty while they themselves are the slaves of corruption*, will quietly suffer you to expose their radical depravity? Think you, that they will be told that *the*

thoughts of man's heart are evil continually from his youth upwards, and that in their flesh dwelleth no good thing, without opposition and rancour towards you? The Prince of pilgrims made full proof of this enmity of human nature to the discovery of its deadly disease. He spake the word, It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: and from that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

THEO. *We know that in our flesh dwelleth no good thing; and it shall be our endeavour, as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so to walk in him, and in him to root and build up, in whom is our fulness, demolishing the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.*

SHEPHERDS. But you have to wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with a wisdom, which is at once earthly, sensual, devilish. Powerful is the mystery of iniquity; it may be compared to that monster, which was supposed to have the head of a lion, the body of a goat, and the tail of a serpent. Even so the world is supported by the flesh, and the flesh by the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience. Young men, have you yourselves overcome that wicked one? And are you moreover so strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, have you so put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, to wrestle not

against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places? Theophilus and Philadelphus, beware of self-confidence. There was a time, when we felt persuaded that our mountain stood strong, and boasted in the presence of *the Captain of our salvation*, that, *though all should forsake him*, we would stand by him to the last, and die with him. Yea, and we lifted the arm of flesh in his defence. But the blunted weapon, and the instantly healed wound, signified unto us that we needed far other arms than those we then possessed, wherewith to repulse the powers of darkness.

Beloved Lord and Master, how can we call to remembrance, without an agony of grief and shame, thy last dreadful conflict with the invisible legions of hell? Did we leave thee desolate, un comforted, and unsupported, in the hour of darkness? Did the big drops of blood flow from thine innocent forehead in thy wrestling with our ghostly enemy; and did we, guilty wretches, remain as unmoved and dead as the stones and the rocks? Thrice didst thou look towards us for comfort and support in that tremendous conflict. Full of amazement and heaviness, thrice didst thou call upon us, *Could ye not watch with me one hour?* Alas! *our flesh was weak*, and we lay entranced in the sleep of death. Yet didst thou assure us, that *the Spirit was willing*; yea,

that the Almighty Spirit was as able as willing to render us more than conquerors. But we had not then learned, *not to war after the flesh*; we had not then renounced all self-confidence, and were unacquainted with those spiritual weapons of warfare, which are *mighty to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*. Thou wast forsaken, *thou wast wounded in the house of thy friends, and the sword awoke against the Shepherd, the man who is the fellow of the Most High. The Shepherd was smitten, and the sheep were scattered, and the hand raised against the little ones*. And could thy mercy still extend itself to the base and traitorous shepherds, who deserted thee in the hour of danger? All we were hirelings, we saw the wolf coming, and left the sheep, and fled; and the wolf ravaged the fold: *but thou didst lay down thy life for the sheep*. Yes, thou didst forgive and set us over thy flock, to feed and protect thy lambs, with far other strength than that of the flesh; with the strength of the experience of the weakness of the flesh, and of the power of the Spirit. My sons, understand you yet that the strength of your Prince *is made perfect in your weakness*? Can you pronounce in the full assurance of faith, the irresistible name, which breaks the whole spell of the powers of darkness?

We have found, replied Theophilus, by our own experience, that *we are strong only in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Pray for us, that we may hold fast his only strength, and never yield it up to the Philistines.

SHEPHERDS. Young men, it is not less difficult to guide the recovered captives to their Lord, than to fight your way unto them through the enemies; for *many walk in the King's highway, of whom we tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, who mind earthly things; but our conversation is in heaven.* Can you lead in the way of humility before God and man? The path to glory is a narrow path, a despised path, a persecuted path; a path, from which there are many turnings to the mountains of Pride, where are set the pits of everlasting contempt. Who among the children of men keepeth his foot uniformly in the way of humility? Who has even a conception of the line of abasement set before him, and which was trodden by the Lord of glory? even by Him, who, when he opened his mouth to declare the way, pronounced, *Blessed are the poor in spirit?* His way is a mystery to the proud; but the man who would discern *all his treasures of wisdom and knowledge*, must view the divine word in that light, which is most abasing to flesh and blood, and most glorious to redeeming grace. My sons, do you discern the divine glory made manifest in the face of Jesus Christ? Do you

see the transcendent excellence of the end, and the wisdom of the means appointed to attain it? Have you already a foretaste of the heavenly inheritance, a glimpse of the beatific communion of Mount Sion, the City of the Living God; wherein *all shall be one in the Father and in the Son, and the glory that was given to the Son, shall be imparted to the saints, that they may be one, even as the Father and the Son are one?* Father, spake our beloved Redeemer, *I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.* Does the glory of God, who hath appointed his children to an exaltation so ineffable, shine into your hearts? Does the divinity of the gospel flash into your souls? and do you cordially love, and earnestly desire the way which leadeth to union with God, and divine charity towards all his creatures? And will you lead in this way of divine righteousness?

THEO. Our hearts burn to be ministers and witnesses of this glory, and to be made instruments to open the eyes of the blind, *to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*

SHEPHERDS. It is fitting also, before you undertake the office of a shepherd, to weigh well the awful responsibility of the trust committed to you. We are commanded *to take heed to our-*

selves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made us overseers: to feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood. How vast a charge is this! Who is equal to it? If a single lamb be lost through our negligence, it is lost for ever, lost to the living waters and beatific pastures of Paradise, and cast into the pit of never-ending misery. And can we expect that his blood will not be required at our hands? The voice of a departed pastor, once a burning and shining light among us, still sounds in our ears. “O my brethren, for I speak to you as if I were yet among you, think what manner of persons you ought to be in all holy conversation and godliness; that so you may shine as lights in the world. Think of that account you must give for those immortal souls committed to your care, which were redeemed by the blood of Christ; who hath sent you in his name to persuade them to be reconciled to God, and at last to present them to him faultless with exceeding joy. He sees, and observes your labours, and will recompense them gloriously in that day. You will never recover your authority, but by living and labouring as you ought to do; not only by living without scandal, but by leading exemplary lives; by being eminent in humility, meekness, sobriety, contempt of the world, and unfeigned love of the brethren; abstracted from the vain conversation of the world, retired and at home, fasting often,

joining prayer and meditation with it. If to such a course of life you would add more labour, not only performing public offices, but watching over the flock, instructing them, exhorting, reproving, and comforting them, as occasion is given, from house to house, making your calling the business of your whole life; you would soon find your own minds grow into a better temper, and your flocks would shew you esteem and regard, and a blessing from God would attend your labours."

O Theophilus and Philadelphus, in the name of the great Shepherd, who will call you one day to account for every sheep of the fold committed to your care, presume not to undertake the charge of a pastor, without weighing well the nature of the calling, and your preparation for it. For if, while you are lovers of pleasure, or human applause, or filthy lucre, or carnal ease, more than lovers of God, you take the field against *the principalities and powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world*; shall not the malicious adversary contemptuously reply, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?* And shall he not trample upon you, and set you at nought? Yea, shall not *the judgment of the Most High begin with the house of God*, and with lukewarm pastors? And shall not the curse of Laodicea be speedily fulfilled? We hope indeed better things of you; but it is still needful for us to warn you well that the gentleness of the lamb, and the

courage of the lion, grace and truth, must now meet in that man, who hopes to maintain the station of a shepherd against all adversaries. If he be overcome, he falls not only under the weight of his own sins, but under the insupportable burden of the transgressions of all those committed to his charge. *But they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*

Weigh well then, my sons, the awful responsibility of the charge to which you aspire; and if you still persevere in your desire, we will pray to the great Shepherd to prepare you, if it be his good pleasure, for the effectual discharge of the calling of a pastor. In the mean time, we will confide an orphan lamb to each of you, to be fed with milk, and nurtured under our own eye. And we shall soon have an opportunity of judging of your *aptness to teach*. For the present, we will only add, in the words of one who is a faithful interpreter and minister of the everlasting Gospel, “They, who desire to be *scribes well instructed for the kingdom of God*, must lay aside all inconsistent pursuits and studies, and have their hearts purified from sinful passions, weaned from earthly affections, and filled with zeal for the glory of God, and love to the souls of men. They must prepare their hearts to seek the word of the Lord; that they may first understand it, then practise it, and afterwards

teach it to others. In these sacred studies they should be diligent and unwearied; and meditation, prayer, and a spiritual mind, will render them delightful. Thus they will become *able ministers of the New Testament, men of God, thoroughly furnished for every good work*; ready scribes, apt to teach, bringing forth out of their treasures things new and old; and, beginning with faithfulness and diligence in a narrow circle, they may in due time expect, *according to the good hand of God upon them*, to be favoured with more extensive opportunities of usefulness. But knowledge, even of the sacred Scriptures, except it be reduced to practice, and communicated to others, will become useless and worthless."

Now will we gather together our flocks, and sing to them one of the sweet songs of Sion, such as they love, before they retire to rest, and such as will impress upon your minds the magnitude of our responsibility.

Shepherds of Salem, rise, and sing
The glory of the Shepherd-King,
The Shepherd-King, whose name inspires,
And all our hearts with rapture fires.

Flocks which on halcyon pastures feed,
To the grateful tale give heed:
Snow-white spotless fleeces bring,
And hear the praises of your King.

What time the fell oppressor's hand
Rag'd destructive o'er your land,
And hireling pastors trembling fled,
And left the dying and the dead:

'Twas then, devoid alone of fear,
The Shepherd-King himself drew near;
'Twas then he prov'd himself alone
Worthy of the Shepherd's throne.

'Tis not less marvellous than true,
The Shepherd-King once pastur'd you.
Full of pity, full of love,
For you he left his throne above.

The Shepherd-King his crown forsook,
For this our humble garb and crook;
Regardless still of toil and shame,
Of every lamb he knew the name.

When from his pasture you would stray,
How did he seek you night and day!
On his own shoulders bear you home,
When in the desert you did roam!

To crystal streams he lov'd to lead,
And bid you in green meadows feed.
He bore the sun's meridian height,
And watch'd for you the frosty night.

'Twas he, who taught your fleece to grow,
And vie with heaven's unspotted snow.
For you that lovely mount to gain,
He bore your sorrow, guilt, and pain.

Oft did you then, sweet flock, rejoice,
To hear your Guardian Shepherd's voice,
To hear his pipe's mellifluous strain:
He lov'd your wayward hearts to gain.

He sung of pastures fair and bright,
Beaming in eternal light,
Where soon he would prepare a place,
That you might see him face to face.

O must I now that day recall;
That day of anguish to us all,
When for this flock, in combat dread,
The Shepherd-King engag'd and bled?

Alone he rose, devoid of fear,
When the murderous foe drew near.
All we aloof in terror stood,
And view'd his anguish, wounds, and blood.

Yet looks of love on us he cast,
And beam'd affection to the last;
Words of sweet comfort e'en in death
He utter'd with his latest breath.

"Farewell, dear flock, for you I die,
For you once more I seek the sky.
So long as earth or heaven endures,
Your heritage this blood secures.

O Shepherds, if you love me, feed
The flock for which I gladly bleed,
That where I am they soon may be,
And my eternal glory see."

CHAP. XVI.

THE shadows of the mountains had now overspread the plain, and the tremulous rays of the moon were quivering in the forest. The shepherds having folded their flocks, and guarded them from the attacks of the enemy, were preparing to retire to rest in their humble habitations.

On a sudden, the loud blast of a trumpet, sounding upon a neighbouring eminence, made the mountains to echo. The shepherd Experience no sooner heard the signal, than, turning to Theophilus and Philadelphus, he said, Young men, you will now see, that the servants of the Shepherd-King are not called to a life of indolence and cowardice. Buckle on your whole armour, and come, witness, and share with us, the warfare to which we are now summoned.

Shepherds, *gather together, assemble yourselves, set up the standard towards Sion. The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way.*

Speedily was the whole company armed for the battle; and began to march towards the field of danger. And now had they advanced beyond the borders of the winding lake, and defiled through the narrow passes of the mountains, before the last rays of the moon had died away. Hereabouts they beheld two strong encampments, which had, in former times, been successively thrown up by the enemies of their King, the Giants Pagan and Pope. Behold, said the shepherd Experience, the memorials of powerful enemies, whom we have already overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony. Nevertheless, in their day, while *the stars in their courses fought from heaven for us*, some fearful pastors abode among the sheep-folds to hear the bleatings of the flocks;—*So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love thee, be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.*

Then did the shepherd lift up on high *the word of the testimony*, and lo, *it gave light to their feet*, and dispersed the thick darkness, as far as was needful. The way indeed was now set with threatening forms, and pit-falls, and precipices; and before the light reached the remote dangers, they appeared frightful, and insurmountable: but no sooner did the shepherds arrive at the spot, than the lamp pointed a direct and safe track through every difficulty. The young pilgrims, who at first were alarmed

by the threatening terrors of the darkness, having for some time observed the effects of the lamp of the testimony, began to take confidence in the light, and admire the faithfulness of Him, whose word was as the cloud and pillar of fire, *a very present help in time of trouble.*

Now as they were marching forwards in this manner, behold a messenger met them, who had been sent for the purpose of giving the earliest intelligence of the threatened danger. The messenger was rejoiced to see them; and the shepherds enquired, of what report he was the bearer?

This evening, he replied, we were feeding the flock of the chief Shepherd upon the summit of the Mountain of Revelation, and celebrating the loving-kindness of the Lord, who in these latter days has blessed us beyond all the generations of our fathers, and expelled from our borders the Giants Pagan and Pope. Having surveyed the great and wide ocean, which separates our mountain from the main land, on which are situated the nine other mountains, which still continue oppressed by the iron rod of the Giant Pope; the view of that unhappy land suggested to our minds, *What are we, O Lord, that thy mercies to us should be so many and so great; that our mountain alone, of all the ten, should be brought to fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name; yea, to give glory to the God of heaven, and become the kingdom of our Lord and*

of his Christ. Then we fell upon our faces, and worshipped the everlasting King, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come, because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

Hardly had we ceased to extol the praises of our great Deliverer, and again cast our eyes over the ocean, than we observed the orb of day become red as blood, as it appeared sinking in the deep waters. At the same instant, a small cloud, as it had been a man's hand, arose; and together with it, a blast swept along the ocean, and the waves of the sea roared dreadfully. As we gazed in awful suspense, on a sudden we felt a tremendous earthquake, and instantly beheld the nearest of the opposite mountains, which are subject to the Giant Pope, cast forth from its summit a black sulphurous smoke.

We immediately gave the alarm to the shepherds who inhabit the district of Carnal-Policy, at the foot of our mountain; but they treated our warning with contempt.

But we, who pitch our tents upon the Mountain of Revelation, surprised and alarmed, gathered about the good shepherd Watchful. *That faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season,* was standing by one of the grand columns upon the Mountain of Revelation, upon which a new and extraordinary light had been flashed from heaven, during the tempest. And

as he stood, he cast his eyes alternately upon the illuminated column, and upon the wide expanded prospect, and pronounced aloud, *Behold I come quickly. Blessed is he that watcheth. Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.* Yea, ever blessed be that faithful and wise servant of the Heavenly King, rejoined the shepherd Experience; our Lord never hath, no, nor ever will *leave himself without witness.* Shepherds, we are admonished now *to watch and pray lest we enter into temptation,* and to take heed to *the blood of the Lamb,* and to the word of our testimony. *Whoso doeth these things shall never fall.*

The company had not advanced far, before they were met by two other shepherds of the King, flying from their flocks, terrified by the threatening aspect of the heavens.

The names of these persons were Hireling and Short-sight; and as they ran, they cried aloud, *There is a lion in the way, a lion is in the mountain.* In vain did the true shepherds exhort them to return to their charge, and admonish them, that, if their Lord should find them absent from their posts, in the present hour of danger, *he would cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites.* These cowards nevertheless continued to run; till the warning of the faithful shepherds was actually verified. A shower of arrows, discharged from invisible hands, in the front of the company, now

fell upon the armour of the true shepherds, but did them no injury. The two fugitives, on the contrary, experienced, that the coward only is vulnerable; while the enemy is put to flight by him that resisteth, and is not able to penetrate the armour of those who face him in the battle. These deserters quickly felt the piercing steel, and miserably expired. Then observed the shepherd Experience, However exposed we are, from time to time, *to perils, sword, and famine*; yet, did we properly understand our everlasting interests, we might find more cause of thankfulness for tribulation, than for power, riches, and ease. *I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, but thou art rich*, said the chief Shepherd to us, in the hour of our most severe persecution by the Giant Pagan. And when the Giant Pope most grievously afflicted us, he spake to the same effect, *Thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.* But no sooner had we experienced a mighty deliverance, and a great reformation by the resurrection, as it were, of *the everlasting Gospel*; and were delivered from that dreadful yoke of spiritual bondage, than we declined into carelessness, self-righteousness, and carnal contentions among ourselves. And we heard a voice from

the throne, saying unto us, *I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.* Then once more the hand of the Giant Pope was raised against us; and then it was that, with his last dying effort, he suddenly cast down the outward courts of our temple, while the careless shepherds were eating, and drinking, and triumphing in their supposed security.

This tremendous judgment did indeed for a time alarm us; and the witnesses of God once more were roused to feed their flocks upon the fair Mountain of Revelation. But alas! this our last and greatest deliverance, the earnest of the deliverance of all the kingdoms of this world, has not been felt and improved by us, as became the redeemed of the Lord. By the mouth of his faithful shepherd Watchful, our Lord hath now admonished us, *to hold fast that which we have, that no man take our crown.* Merciful Saviour, grant, we beseech thee, that we may now, even now, *while it is called to-day, remember how we have received, and heard, and hold fast, and repent of all our unrighteousness and self-righteousness.* *If any man hath an ear to hear, let him hear and understand, how, in truth and verity, he hath received, if so be that he hath received any good and perfect gift from above.* *For what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?*

Men and brethren, the searching and scrutinizing hour of darkness and temptation is coming, yea, and is already *come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. The spirits of devils are gone forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.*

In this fearful hour, what are we doing? Are we such manner of persons as we were in the days of our warfare with the Giant Pagan? Are we not, on the contrary, corrupted by prosperity, and *wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked?* Verily our chief Shepherd will not thus be requited. His ineffable and stupendous love, wherewith *he first loved us*, demands the return, not of a divided, lukewarm affection, but *the whole love of our whole heart, mind, soul, and strength.* Every portion of affection and service withheld from him is fixed, I testify, upon his most inveterate enemy, the prince of this world. *You cannot halt between God and Mammon.* Now or never must you decide, *whom you will serve.* *He is a jealous God*, and the hour is come, wherein he will winnow his corn with the spirit of his mouth, and *thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the barn; but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire.* *Be zealous therefore and repent.* *To him that overcometh, saith the Lord, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.* He

that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

These words are faithful and true, rejoined the shepherd Heavenly-mind. Since our last grand conflict with the Giant Pope, in which we were marvellously delivered from his yoke, and received the scattered lambs which he expelled from his territory, it is but too true that the poisonous and infectious mist of infidelity has been gradually overspreading his land, as the shepherd Watchful testifies; and alas! it has been wafted at times over the ocean, and infected the lower regions of these mountains. This indeed is *the temptation which cometh upon all the earth*. The hour of persecution may be past: not so, the hour of temptation. Though Balaam cannot injure us in open war; yet if he can seduce us, and corrupt our principles by the poisonous breath of the old serpent, the tooth of the serpent must follow.

The company now arrived at the Mountain of Revelation. With reverence and awe they ascended its awful heights, and upon its summit they found the shepherd Watchful, ever vigilant, and observant of the signs, and of the seasons. And thus they saluted the faithful pastor. *Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye, return, come. Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth*

it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Go now, look towards the sea.

The shepherds obeyed the direction of the venerable seer, and looked towards the sea; and, behold, a black and poisonous smoke covered the expanse of waters, and the main land beyond them. And now again the earth shook, as it had been to its foundations, and the opposite mountain in a moment clave asunder, and darted volumes of fire from its crater against the heavens. The dark region of the mountains now glared far and wide on all sides, and the ocean reflected the burning volcano, as though it had been flaming in the depths of the abyss. Torrents of liquid fire were vomited from the lofty peak, and began to extend themselves in every direction; while the inhabitants of the neighbouring districts were seen flying in terror and anguish. In vain did they endeavour, with the arm of flesh, to raise up mounds and barriers to restrain the liquid fire; the scorching torrents burst every mound, and the whole plain was shortly in a blaze. They fled to the remote mountains, and sought protection upon their summits, while the sea of fire still swelled and expanded itself continually.

The shepherds beheld this dreadful scene

with astonishment and awe, and reported it to the shepherd Watchful, enquiring, *Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?* The watchman said, *The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye, return, come.* I beheld the earth, and lo, it was without form and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down, at the presence of the Lord, and by his fierce anger. For thus saith the Lord, *I will pour out my indignation upon thee, I will blow against thee in the fire of my wrath, and deliver thee into the hand of brutish men, and skilful to destroy, and thou shalt be for fuel to the fire. The flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burnt therein. And all flesh shall see that I the Lord have kindled it: it shall not be quenched. Go now, look again towards the sea.*

Again the shepherds cast their eyes over the ocean, and lo, the flames had melted the very foundations of the mountains; and in a moment, with a dreadful crash, they sunk down into the burning abyss. And now the land was overwhelmed, and deluged by one broad sheet of liquid fire.

The shepherds reported the fearful spectacle,

and again enquired, *Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?* The watchman said, *The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye, return, come. Behold it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord God; this is the day whereof I have spoken. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth; and all flesh shall see the salvation of God. Shepherds of the Living God, now let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. Shepherds, blow the trumpet in Sion; the hour is come, the acceptable time is arrived, that, after this fearful night of judicial darkness and infatuation, ye should shine as lights of the world, holding forth the word of life.*

The shepherds of the Living God blew the grand trumpet upon the Mountain of Revelation, and they, *that had ears to hear*, speedily assembled upon the eminence. Then they set up on high the banner of the cross, and lifted up the censer of Aaron, and the blood of the Lamb, and the volume of the word of their testimony; and, with voices and hands raised with one accord in prayer and supplication, they stood upon the mount, as Moses in the battle with the Amalekites. *O Lord, the great and mighty God, keeping the covenant, and mercy to them that love*

him, and to them that keep his commandments, we have sinned, and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly. O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us, confusion of face. O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, we beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from the City Jerusalem. Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servants, and their supplications; and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

Now I saw that, while they were yet speaking, and praying, and confessing their sins, the glory of the Lord flashed a light, brighter than that of the sun, upon the whole series of columns which crown the Mountain of Revelation. As beacons, immoveably fixed on an everlasting rock, they now cast a clear and blazing light upon the vast expanse of the smoky deluge, which had overspread the whole earth. The shepherds beheld the terrific scene in all its horrors. The dark, poisonous, and sulphureous vapour of lawlessness and anarchy had now extended itself over the earth; *and all flesh died, that moved upon the earth.* Only the summits of the Mountains of God appeared like islands, rising above the misty deluge. Mount Ararat, Mount Moriah, Mount Sion, now manifested their astonishing elevation, and the purple arch of the covenant of salvation was reflecting all its glory upon their summits.

The shepherds reported the glad tidings to

the shepherd Watchful, and enquired, *Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night?* The watchman said, *The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye, return, come. Now shall ye return and discern between the righteous and the wicked; between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Unto you that fear my name, saith the Lord, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings. Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching. Shepherds of the living God, once and again be warned to watch over your flocks, and guard them from the deadly infection of lawlessness, and false doctrine: yea, admonish one another and comfort one another with these words, *The Lord is at hand.* Pray moreover that *the Spirit may be poured from on high* upon the witnesses of the faith, that you may be stirred up to trim your lamps, and hold forth the pure unadulterated Gospel of Grace, in the sight of all nations; that you may become *the light of the world, a city set on an hill that cannot be hid.* O Lord, hasten thy kingdom; O Lord, seal no longer the sayings of thy book, for the time is at hand. Come, thou root and offspring of David, thou*

bright and morning star, come. The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, and give glory to the God of heaven. Yea, come speedily, thou that art the desire of all nations, and the glory of thy people Israel.

On Pisgah's height the raptur'd prophet stood,
All earth's expanse surveyed, all ocean's flood,
Saw time's revolving circle at a glance,
And pierc'd the vail beyond in wondrous trance.

Israel's portentous camp, extended nigh,
Fir'd with astonishment his piercing eye,
His eye expanded, and empower'd to trace
The Father's blessing in the chosen race.

He saw them in affliction's furnace dwell,
Fast bound in chains of sin, and pains of hell,
Until the mystic Lamb's all-hallow'd blood
Broke the dread sorcerer's spell, and dried the flood.

Baptiz'd in ocean, he beheld them raise
The hand in triumph, and the voice in praise;
On earth's rude wilderness he saw them stand,
And turn their footsteps to the promis'd land.

'Tis God who blesseth Jacob, who can curse?
Thy sentence, Lord, what mortal can reverse?
Lo, in their tabernacle God abides!
Jehovah on the cloudy pillar rides!

Around the throne, as Cherubim they stand,
Their mystic ensigns quarter every land.

Before their ox the nations are as dust,
Who shall their lion from his booty thrust?

In four-square strength, immoveable, their camp
Of God's eternal city bears the stamp.
Thrice blessed Salem, who is he can curse?
Who can the sentence of thy God reverse?

Amidst the nations, thou shalt walk alone,
None but Jehovah shall thy people own.
Through the world's gloomy wilderness thy way,
I see thee hastening to eternal day.

Shall Moab thrust thee from fair Canaan's coast?
Shall Amalek subdue thy faithful host?
These shall afflict, they cannot thee restrain,
From thy Jehovah who the palm can gain?

Chittim itself, thy last and greatest foe,
Shall not of Jacob's seed one soul o'erthrow.
But who shall live, when great Jehovah's hand
Is rais'd in vengeance over Chittim's land?

With heart enlarging, and still opening eyes,
I see thy glorious day-star, Judah, rise!
I hear thy wondrous King's resistless shout!
Of thy last enemy I see the rout!

Who now the dust of Salem's sons can count,
Of Israel's rising dust the vast amount?
Thrice blessed they, who, as *The Righteous*, die;
His end, how glorious! and His throne, how high!

What though thy law and lawgiver shall fail,
By one offence, our Canaan to assail;
Yet Jordan's reflux floods, at length, portend,
That to thy *Jesus* all our knees must bend.

'Tis God who blesseth Jacob, who can curse?
Thy sentence, Lord, what mortal shall reverse?
Lo, in their tabernacle God abides!
Jehovah on the cloudy pillar rides!

CHAP. XVII.

THE shepherds, with Theophilus and Philadelphus, now returned to their peaceable habitations, redoubling their vigilance to watch and pray over their flocks, lest *the day of the Lord should come upon them as a thief in the night*; firmly convinced by the face of the sky, that *the kingdom of their God was at hand, even at the door*; when every eye should see him, and they also that pierced him. But of that day and hour they knew not, nor desired to know; only to labour in their occupation, so much the more as they saw the day approaching.

Theophilus and Philadelphus now received from the shepherds, each of them, a white lamb which had lost its mother.

The shepherds gave them milk wherewith to nourish these little creatures; and they fed, nourished, and guarded them with all their power. Now the shepherds were very careful about the milk wherewith they fed these babes; because, if any unwholesome ingredient was

mixed with it, the lambs never arrived at perfection. The primary ingredient in this nourishment, was *repentance from dead works*; the second, *faith towards God* for righteousness; to which was added stronger meat as they could receive it.

The young pilgrims soon became very fond of their young lambs, and the little creatures were not less attached to them. But there dwelt very near the place an ugly she-wolf, whose name was Self-will. This blood-thirsty animal was always upon the watch to destroy the lambs, if she could by any means elude the vigilance of the shepherds.

Now, one night, as Theophilus and his friend were watching over their tender charge, and conversing upon the wonders which had been revealed to them, engraved with the finger of God upon the grand series of columns, which are set upon the Mountain of Revelation; what should make its appearance, but this wolf, disguised in the skin of a sheep? The poor little lambs supposed that it had been their mother, and the wolf was tempting them to stray from their little fold and follow her. And now were the vigilance and courage of the young men put to the test. They soon discerned the formidable enemy, and rose to preserve their little lambs, who were disposed to follow the cruel wolf. So Theophilus and Philadelphus seized their staves, and pursued the wild beast, and a

dreadful conflict ensued; for it was an old and stubborn beast. At last, having received several wounds, they drove away the furious enemy. Yet did she from time to time return, watching an opportunity to beguile the lambs; and it was not till after many conflicts, that the two friends at last succeeded in inflicting upon her the deadly blow. In the issue however they killed her, stripped her of her disguise, and exposed her before their lambs. From that time the lambs learned to prize their young shepherds, and willingly to follow them whithersoever they led. And it would be happy, if all who have little lambs to rear, would take the same pains to feed them with the pure milk of the word, and frustrate the first approaches of this breed of wolves, which abounds in the wilderness of nature, and from thence secretly penetrates the fold of many unwary shepherds, and suckles their unsuspecting lambs.

The shepherds were much pleased with the vigilance and firmness of the young men, and entertained increased hopes, that they would one day become notable shepherds in the service of their King. Nor did Theophilus and Philadelphus give less satisfaction to the shepherds, by their diligence in the study of the Book of Life. After much application, they could now enumerate all the duties which it inculcated, with every specified motive to, and means of performing each duty respectively. For these faithful

shepherds, setting aside the vain wisdom of this world, taught simply the practice of Christian virtues upon Christian principles. It was their wisdom to place every topic simply in that light, in which the All-wise had himself placed it. And they desired not to be wise above that which is written, nor to fall short of divine wisdom by leaning to their own understanding. Hence it was that the royal flock knew their voice, *for they know not the voice of strangers*; and the Spirit of Almighty God accompanied and blessed his own appointed means.

Happy Theophilus and Philadelphus, to be trained by such guides to the glorious office of a royal shepherd, a standard-bearer of the Cross of Salvation! Frequently did the young pilgrims converse sweetly together, and glorify the loving-kindness of their Redeemer, in awakening them, and calling them forth from the City of Destruction. Every day they became more sensible that all things which had occurred in their way, *had worked together for their good*, to humble them, to exercise their graces, and to burn away the dross of corruption. Not seldom did they consult earnestly together, and lift up their voices in prayer, to be taught, how they might hereafter succeed *in beseeching perishing sinners to be reconciled to God*. And there was now every reason to hope, from their simple dependence upon the heavenly Teacher, that the word

of God, in their mouths, would not go forth in vain.

But the Lord giveth not account of any of his matters; for God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction. One night Theophilus dreamed a dream, and lo, an archer riding upon a pale horse came forth from a thick damp mist, and fixing his eye upon him, drew his deadly bow, and the unerring arrow was fixed in his lungs. The blood flowed, and Theophilus felt his mortal wound; when, raising his eyes from the ground, he beheld the mist rolling away, and lo, the setting sun, half hid behind a lofty mountain, and surrounded by a canopy of purple clouds, appeared as though it had been the portal of glory. As he gazed upon the delightful prospect, behold, two persons clothed in white, with palms in their hands, seemed to proceed from the glory, and speedily stood before him. They looked upon him with tender affection, and clasping their hands together, leaned over his bed, and with one accord uttered these words—*Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt inherit the crown of life.* As they spake these words, Theophilus recognized his long-lost parents; and stretching forth his arms to embrace them, he awoke, and lo, it was a

dream. *All these things worketh God sometimes with man; and yet man understandeth not.* It was not long however before Theophilus had a second and more manifest token, that, *of the two who were in the field, the one should be taken and the other left.* Blessed is he that is found watching, and about his master's work, as was Theophilus in that evening, when the angel of death stood before him; not armed with stings and scorpions, but as an angel of light, delivering unto him an invitation to the wedding-supper of his Lord, to the society of just men made perfect, and of angels and archangels in the presence of the Lord of Glory. Theophilus *sorrowed not as they that have no hope*, when he felt the fatal arrow now actually penetrating and consuming his lungs, and beheld the stream of blood beginning to flow from the wound. Brother, said he to his disconsolate friend, how does it now come home to me, that *there is but one thing needful!* To be prepared for this hour I now fully feel to be the one only concern of our whole lives. How horrible is the state of that man, who suddenly finds himself upon the brink of eternity, and has never before seriously prepared for his departure into the unseen, never-ending world of spirits! How dreadful to appear before God without a Mediator! My brother, to stand upon the boundaries of the unseen world, is a situation which no one can imagine, who is not in the act of

fuel experiencing it. It is as though a fire were now proving the work which is in me. Alas! there is ~~fuel~~ within me for the flames. The searching fire reveals the straw and stubble of self-dependance, self-sufficiency, and iniquity, which remain in me, and which mine eye had not discovered. Now, my brother, now in truth it flashes upon me, that *the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* O Lord, search my heart, and try my reins; O Lord, cleanse me thoroughly. Redeem me now at last from myself, and grant that *I may be found in thee, not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness which is of thee by faith.* Brother, were I to be restored to health, methinks I could, from what I now experience, declare and describe the righteousness of God, the alone foundation, with a spirit and energy, which should burst the tombs, and awaken the dead. Where are the dear shepherds? call them, bid the faithful men of God come speedily. As the faces of angels they will now be to me. I need all your prayers.

The shepherds of the Living God speedily stood before Theophilus. They knew him better than he knew himself; they soon discerned the state of his soul, and they knew well to beat down the confident, and to strengthen and comfort the broken and contrite heart. The man that *feareth always*, was the man after their heart. The shepherd Experience kindly took him by the

hand, and drew from him an account of all that was passing in his inner man; after which, he kneeled down, and prayed fervently for him—O God of faithfulness, we humbly beseech thee, complete the great work of righteousness in this thy servant, now in the season of his last visitation. Grant that his near and distinct view of thy judgment may not overwhelm him with the consciousness of that self-righteousness, and unholiness, which cleave, alas, to every vessel of clay. O God, the righteousness of sinners, speedily complete his last humiliation through the sight of himself, and hasten to raise his eyes from the dark view of his own corruptions, to the bright and glorious sight of thine own righteousness. O make thy face to shine upon him. As thou hast shewn him what he is in himself, make manifest unto him now, what he is in Thee, who didst love him before the foundation of the world, and who art thyself *the Lord his Righteousness*. Behold, *he maketh no mention of his own goodness*, yea, he abhorreth himself in dust and ashes—He pleads guilty, unfeignedly and unreservedly, and crieth for mercy in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ. O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us, the noble works that thou didst in their days, and in the old time before them. *We look at the generations of old. Did ever any trust in the Lord, and was forsaken? or did any abide in his*

fear, and was confounded? or whom didst thou ever despise, that called upon thee? for thou art full of compassion and mercy, long-suffering, and very pitiful, and forgivest sins, and savest in time of affliction. We will now fall into thy hands, O Lord, and not into the hands of men, for as is thy majesty, so is thy mercy.

The spirit of Theophilus now began to revive, and the shepherd Heavenly-mind took his hand, and spreading before him the broad and full roll of the covenant, directed him to look upon it, and say, what it was he could want, that was not amply provided for in the articles of it; and what further confirmation, than the oath of the Infallible and the blood of the All-righteous, he could desire. Think not, my son, *that any strange thing hath happened unto thee*, to which thy brethren are strangers. If there be a disposition of soul, to which the promises of God are made, it is that of *the broken and contrite heart*: if there be an evidence of self-knowledge, and divine knowledge, and of growth in grace, it is the increased perception of our own utter emptiness and vileness, as of ourselves. It is the Spirit, the Spirit of Almighty God, which is greater than your heart, which is now at work within you, sifting you as wheat, *and thoroughly cleansing his floor*, that you may be a glorious habitation for God. Consider the prophets and apostles of old. Did they not rise in divine righteousness, and receive the

stamp of the vessels of God, just in the same proportion as they sunk in self-estimation and self-dependance below other men? How was he esteemed of the righteous Judge, who pleaded, and said, *Behold I am vile: I will lay mine hand upon my mouth?* Could even blood-guiltiness destroy him, who pleaded, *I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me: behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me: create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me?* To whom did the Lord promise, *Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days;* and to whom did he reveal the glory of his kingdom, and *the everlasting righteousness*, but to him, who was found in the very act of *confessing with prayer and supplications, with fasting, and sackcloth, and ashes, We have sinned and committed iniquity, and have done wickedly?* And who was he, that *was caught up into the third heaven, into paradise, and heard unspeakable words*, but the same, who confessed, and verily felt, *I know that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing?* The same was he, of whom it is written, that he was an ensample to them that walk in the way of righteousness, the apostle of the grace of the gospel; to whose doctrine they who submit not, must be *anathema maranatha*; after whose example who walk not must be shunned. To him the whole counsel of God, at last fully revealed in the dispensation of the Spirit, was made manifest; and

the gospel of the kingdom, to be declared to all nations, committed to him. Be not thou then disheartened, because, like him, thou now feelest thine own weakness; but, like him, *be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.* Our prophet *hath smitten the waters of the river with his mantle, he hath passed over triumphant, he hath ascended the chariot of Israel, he hath rode up on high in the chariot of fire.* Behold him, see him leading captivity captive; keep a single eye fixed upon him, stretch out thy hand for his robe of righteousness and immortality, and with his robe of glory *smite the river*, and lo, his power shall be with thee, *his robe shall be thy robe*, thou shalt pass over the floods, and sit down at his table in the wedding-garment of the children of light.

Theophilus received comfort from the fountain of consolation, while the kind shepherds supplicated the throne of grace on his behalf. Having bid a last farewell to his little lamb, which followed him with its eye, and mourned after him; and having again and again thanked all the shepherds for their kindness and instructions, he prepared to set his face towards Mount Zion.

Philadelphus, Experience, and Heavenly-mind, would accompany him to the passage of Jordan; and it was no small comfort to him, to travel with his beloved friend and his faithful guides. As they passed over the last of the Delectable Mountains, Theophilus was casting a

lingering look upon the abode of Peace and Calm-Delight. My son, exclaimed the shepherd Heavenly-mind, thou wilt soon behold the prototype of every thing that is fair and lovely below. Why do thine eyes tarry upon the earthly Canaan, while the Heavenly Jerusalem is coming into sight? Thrice happy place, where dear friends who were wont to enquire together, and hear and converse together concerning the Land of Promise, are now in full possession and enjoyment of it. Where they, who were wont to complain to one another, and open their doubts to one another, whether ever they should be accounted worthy to enter into it, there rejoice together, and triumph over all doubts and fears. Where they who associated together for mutual edification and encouragement, are joined in the communion of consolation never to be parted, as on earth they were united in the fellowship of contempt from the world. Where they who sowed in tears, now reap the fulness of joy. Where they are one in Christ, as Christ is one with the Father, and with one accord raise the voice of praise and thanksgiving to the God of all consolation, and sit down with the fathers of the faithful, and with all the holy and righteous servants of their Lord, of whom they have ever heard, or read, or of whom there is no memorial save in the Book of Life. Then did the shepherds shew to him the sepulchre of Moses, an everlasting monument

of the short-sightedness of pilgrims, who stand upon this side Jordan, and hanker after the unsatisfactory objects which eye hath seen and ear hath heard.

At length they arrived at the place where Christian met the Flatterer, and he was ready prepared too for Theophilus. So, as he passed by, he accosted him, saying, Happy pilgrim, what a privilege it is so soon to have finished your course, and to receive so early an invitation to the Feast of the Saints!

Theophilus replied, He that flattereth me is no friend, but an assassin. *Let the righteous smite me, and it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me, it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head. O God, mine eyes are unto thee, in thee is my trust.* So he turned from the Flatterer with disgust.

From hence they travelled forwards, and held sweet converse together concerning the glories of the Land of Promise; and thus discoursing together they passed through the Enchanted Ground, having their hearts set upon the joys of the Heavenly Paradise, a view of which overpowereth the spell of this counterfeit Eden of Carnal-security. Alas! how many pilgrims here grow sleepy and careless, yea sometimes are struck with the palsy, or have their tongues cut out by the enchanter Love-ease. Here it was that the Ephesian pilgrims *lost their first love*, and here many of the Laodi-

cean pilgrims stand at this moment, enchanted, and *beguiled of their reward* by one called Rational-Religion.

From hence they proceeded to the Land of Beulah, whose air is so sweet and pleasant. Here they heard the continual singing of the Birds of Paradise, and saw the lilies of glory springing from corruptible seeds, buried in the earth. Here too they heard the turtle of peace and loving-kindness. Here also was a pillar with an inscription, which seemed, as it were, to wipe away the last tear from the eye of Theophilus—*Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also.*

Theophilus now felt his heart enlarged, and began to discourse with Philadelphus, as he drew nigh to the Land of Glory. Beloved brother, he said, since it is not allotted to me, to fulfil my intention of visiting my brethren in the flesh, in order to warn them *to fly from the wrath to come, and to lay hold of eternal life*, do thou assure them that the heart of the dying Theophilus bleeds for them. Unite his testimony to thine own, and testify unto them, that great is the provocation wherewith they have incensed their Sovereign Lord and Judge. Testify unto them, that a speedy and horrible judgment awaits them, unless they repent, while

repentance is available. My brother, *exhort them daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of them be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.* Warn them not to defer, for one moment, to turn to the Lord their God, lest they be suddenly cut off, and perish for ever. There was a time when I also said unto my soul, *Thou hast many years before thee, eat, drink, and be merry, to-day, and to-morrow take up thy cross, and repent.* O had I followed the counsel of my carnal heart, and not in my youth been *plucked by grace like a brand out of the fire*, merciful God, what had now been my sensations! If the passage to the unseen world, to the tribunal of my heart-searching Judge, after the grace which I have received, has been thus formidable to my spirit; how should I have received the summons to stand before him, had I been found lingering in the City of Destruction? Remorse and terror would then have overwhelmed me, and I should have been driven away in my wickedness. But now, *I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day: yea, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in my flesh I shall see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.*

Philadelphus wept, and promised to remember the injunction of his dear friend, should it ever be allotted to him, *in meekness to instruct*

those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Theophilus now arrived at a beautiful eminence, from which he beheld, *as through a glass darkly*, the outline of the Celestial City, reflecting all the colours of the rainbow; and over it, a glory, which cast a blazing stream of light upon the City, which no mortal eye can gaze upon and live. Here he was admitted to all the privileges and delights of the place, with which Christian and Hopeful had been privileged. Here he saw pillars inscribed with prophecies, and testimonies of the faithfulness of the Lord of the Heavenly City, by the fathers of the faithful, while they were departing from the body, and entering within the vail.

At length the channel of the river was discernible. Now there stood by the river, a cross with a crown upon it, on which there was an inscription, which the shepherds would have Theophilus read, lest a sudden view of the destructive monster which inhabits the river, should shake his confidence in the Deliverer. Now this was the inscription—

Pilgrim, who tremblest by the shore,
Where the depths ingulphing roar,
Where the monster Death expands
His venom'd jaws, and threatening stands;

Full long the torturer rear'd his head,
Sole lord and tyrant of the dead,

Nor aught beheld, that could withstand
The grasp of his all-conquering hand.

At length the champion Saviour came,
Immanuel his almighty name;
Leading triumphant captive hosts,
He met the terror of these coasts.

Then first the monster quak'd with fear,
When now the Son of God drew near:
With palsied strength, and powerless sting,
He rose before the Warrior-King.

We heard the lighting of their blows,
We saw them in the combat close,
Till plunging in the gulph profound,
The lowest depth of hell they found.

Nor yet the Conqueror loos'd his hold,
Though flames Tartarean round him roll'd,
Though all the powers of raging hell
Engag'd his valour to repel.

No respite there the foe could gain,
He breath'd Cerberean flames in vain,
On his own throne now made to feel
The deadly wound of matchless steel.

Tortur'd and wreathing, thence on high
The Conqueror bore him to the sky;
And there his horrid form displayed,
Low at Jehovah's footstool laid.

Pilgrim, to him then lift thine eyes,
And yon weak, wounded foe despise.
Thou on Immanuel's strength depend,
And fearless to these depths descend.

Then spake the shepherd Experience his last words of exhortation to Theophilus—While Christ is the foundation, root, head, and husband of his people; while the word of God is yea and amen; while the counsels of God are unchangeable; while we have a Mediator and High Priest before the throne; while the Holy Spirit is willing and able to bear witness to the truths of the Gospel; while God is wiser than men, and stronger than Satan—so long the believer in Jesus is, and shall be safe. Heaven and earth must pass away, but the promise, the oath, the blood, on which thy soul relies, affords thee a security which can never fail.

Theophilus felt that these were the words of one who was a shepherd indeed, *not according to the rudiments of the world, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ*; and he felt an increase of faith and hope, as he listened to them.

And now the hour being come for his departure, he once more expressed his gratitude to his beloved guides; and turning to Philadelphus, My dear brother, he said, now I feel a foretaste of the full blessedness of the redeemed. Now I feel how small a thing it is to give up all that the world delights in, for the peace and hope I now experience in Him, who *hath spoiled principalities and powers, who hath led captivity captive, who hath received gifts, glorious gifts for miserable men*. O never, never let this hour be forgotten by thee; but remember the dying

words of thy Theophilus, thy friend, thy companion—and run, with increased earnestness and zeal, *the race that is set before thee*, as a faithful servant of the Most High. O sorrow not for me. *To live is Christ, but to die is gain.* Then did Theophilus once more embrace his weeping friend.

The sound of sweet music, as it had been of a melodious trumpet, was heard in the air, and the languid face of Theophilus once more beamed on them all a smile of peace and holy joy; and having exclaimed with fervour, I come, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit! he courageously descended into the river, lifting up his voice, and glorifying his Deliverer—I *will magnify the loving-kindnesses of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed upon me, according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his loving-kindnesses. The Lord, the Most High, hath been my Saviour. In all my affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved me: in his love and in his pity he redeemed me, and he bare me, and carried me all the days of old. He leadeth me with his right hand, dividing the water before me. He leadeth me through the deep; the Spirit of the Lord causeth me to rest. Since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, besides thee, what thou hast prepared for him that waiteth on thee—O my soul, bless God, the great King. O*

Jerusalem, Jerusalem the City of my God, verily they have not told half thy glory! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem the City of my God, thou art indeed built up with sapphires and precious stones; thy walls and battlements with pure gold. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, all thy streets are paved with beryl, and carbuncle, and stones of Ophir. And all thy streets say, Alleluiah, and praise the Lord, the everlasting King, and say, Blessed be God, which hath extolled it for ever.

Then I saw, in my dream, that the fair form of Heavenly-Wisdom once more became visible to Theophilus, and taking him by the hand, supported him over the depths of Jordan, and set him safely on the opposite shore. A smile of peace and calm delight shed a serene lustre over his countenance, while he laid aside his mortal garments. For he could carry no one thing away with him but charity, the unfeigned love of God and of all his creatures. The flame of charity alone was not extinguished by the waters of the river, but it rested upon his head; and the further he advanced, it shone with a radiance and glory more pure and extensive. For of all things upon earth charity only is immortal, and abideth with the children of God, signifying that there is a happiness infinitely above that which the world conceiveth, and shewing them wherein that happiness consists, even in sympathy, fellow-feeling, and union for ever.

And now Theophilus stood upon the opposite shore, clothed in robes of light and immortality; and two angels of glory stood ready to receive him from the hands of his guide. And with these words did the guardian Spirit give up her charge to the rejoicing angels—Beloved Fidelis and Irene, receive your dear child, from whom you departed for a season that you should receive him for ever; not now as a mortal, but above a mortal, a fellow-heir of glory, beloved, specially to me, and unto you both, in the flesh and in the Lord. Blessed are they who suffer for my name's sake—*let them leave their fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let the widows of the righteous trust in me.* Who can describe the delight with which the blessed parents received their long-lost child? Who can imagine their sensations of joy over their son, *begotten as it were again, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, reserved in heaven?* Nothing indeed could surpass their joy over their child, but their gratitude to the guardian Spirit, who had been the Alpha and Omega in his salvation.

Now I saw, in my dream, that the three angels of light spread their purple wings, and speedily mounted to the gate of the Celestial City.

The everlasting gates were set open, and a glimpse of the inaccessible light proceeding from them overpowered mine eyes.

The sound of trumpets, and of shawms, and of bells, and the voices of harpers *harping with their harps*, testified the joyful reception of Theophilus in the City of God. But these were the only words which I could distinctly hear; *Thou shalt shew us the path of life, in thy presence is the fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* Alleluiah!



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